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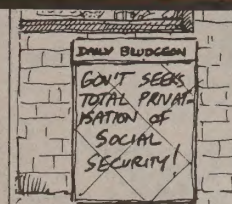


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Clarke triumphs!

The final major hurdle for Tom Clarke's Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Bill was triumphantly negotiated last month. It now looks bound to be the most important piece of legislation for disabled people since Alf Morris' 1970 Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act.

The Government was forced to retreat on proposed amendments which would have torn the heart from the Bill, following intense public and parliamentary pressure which culminated in a clash between the Prime Minister and the Labour leader in the House.

At the Reports stage and Third Reading of the Bill on 11 April, Tom Clarke moved and the Government accepted the following amendments:

- That disabled people in long-stay hospitals will have the right to an assessment of their needs. The Government had wished to remove this. They succeeded, however, in removing from the Bill disabled people's right to inform social services of their discharge 28 days before they leave.

- That disabled young people with special educational needs should be given a full assessment of their needs by the social services department before they leave school. The Government had also wanted this clause removed.

- That joint planning and consultation procedures in Scotland be brought into line with England and Wales.

The bad news is that Tom Clarke's clause giving carers of disabled people the right to call for an assessment of their needs independent of the person they care for has not been restored to the Bill.

Tony Newton, Minister for the Disabled, has pledged that the Government will look at this again before the Bill goes through the House of Lords, but they could not allow any "open-ended commitment" to carers, he said, because of the resource implications.

The Bill also gives disabled people the right to appoint an advocate to represent their views to social services and health departments; and it calls for the right to better assessment procedures under the 1970 CSDP Act.

Tom Clarke, Labour MP for Monklands West, said: "I'm delighted that we saved so much of the Bill because right up to the day before, we had every indication that the Government would oppose the Bill."

"The carers' clause was a disappointment," he said, "But having a debate on carers and drawing attention to the work they do can only do good, and makes future changes more likely."

Public opinion, he said, expressed itself just at the right time, and an exchange between Margaret Thatcher and Neil Kinnock in Prime Minister's Question Time indicated the impact the Bill had made.

Continued on page 16



Graham Davies, Surrey Herald

Mrs T on bended knee! Six-year-old Carlos Standing was just one of the children with cerebral palsy the Prime Minister got to know when she visited White Lodge Centre. Story and picture on page 13.

Invalid Care Allowance does discriminate

Mrs Jacqueline Drake from Manchester, who has fought the Government for the right to receive £23 a week in Invalid Care Allowance as a married woman, saw her case taken a step further last month. The advocate-general of the European Court of Justice said that the Government's refusal to pay married women the allowance it pays to married men was in breach of the 1979 EEC directive on sex discrimination.

The Court will probably give a formal judgement in June but it normally follows the opinion of the advocate-general.

So round 3 goes to Mrs Drake. First she won her case before the social security appeal tribunal last year. Then, when the Government appealed against the decision, her case was referred to the European Court by the social security commissioners. And now she is set to win her case in Europe.

"I am delighted with the news", she said, and she urged the 96,000 married women carers in the country who

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Conductive Education: Society moves

The Spastics Society is to evaluate Conductive Education as practised at Ingfield Manor, its school in Sussex. Project Co-ordinator will be Dr Lillemor Jernqvist, one of the Society's educational psychologists and a leading exponent of Conductive Education in the UK.

The Society's decision to evaluate the work of Ingfield, where there has been a Conductive Education unit for 12 children with severe and multiple disabilities since 1976, is a first step towards considering whether the school should become a centre for Conductive Education.

The Spastics Society is also to launch a "modest" training programme in Conductive Education and to plan other Schools for Parents modelled on the School now helping 11 families at Ingfield.

"We are not responding to the

present emotional wave of publicity," says Freddie Green, director of education and a former HMI in special education. "This is part of an educational policy which is reviewing all our educational provision. It is quite fortuitous that our thoughts have come to a head at this time."

Freddie Green hopes to get the go-ahead this month from the Department of Education for a 3-month, £12,000 research project which will map and describe Conductive Education as it is practised in some 30 schools in the UK, visit Budapest, and suggest how the principles of CE can be applied more widely.

He is concerned at inaccuracies in recent articles about Conductive Education and The Spastics Society, particularly about the DES project.

"We are not suggesting that the Government should fund a

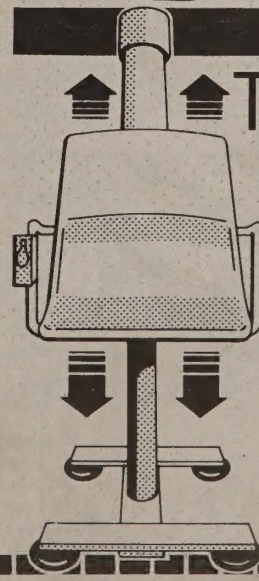
project to see if it should be funded," he says. "That's quite ludicrous. We are seeking an evaluation of work which is currently going on in this country. As such it is quite different from the Birmingham project which appears to be trying to replicate the Hungarian model." He likened the work with 9 children in Birmingham to the work going on with the 12 children at Ingfield.

To the criticism that The Spastics Society has not put its best foot forward to develop Conductive Education in the UK, he says, "Why haven't all the other special educators of this country rushed to Budapest and grasped Conductive Education and brought it back? It's a vast industry, special education. No one has done more than the Society. Most people have done nothing at all."

Parents speak - see page 4

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Letters to the Editor

Disability Now 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

No miracle cure in Bridgwater

As an Association representing parents and professionals living and working with those with Down's Syndrome, we are somewhat concerned at recent reports in the *Today* newspaper about the treatment of Down's Syndrome.

Articles appearing in *Today* on 17 and 18 March claimed that the Bridgwater Jacket produced by the British Institute of Brain Injured Children provided a "miracle cure" for Down's Syndrome. The articles explained that the waistcoat "forces the child to breathe properly. By increasing the blood supply to the brain it causes a remarkable transformation in physical looks and mental ability".

Our Association has, for a number of years, offered help for children with Down's Syndrome in the form of a wide range of early stimulation programmes. Achievements are not unique to those children who take part in the Bridgwater programme; a number of children with Down's Syndrome attend normal nurseries and primary schools and are happily placed at secondary level. The majority of these children have led relatively normal lives with extra stimulation in the form of physical activities, sensory training games, special subject and language activities.

The favourable results of such early stimulation have been carefully assessed and documented over a number of years and by a number of renowned experts.

It seems that there is not reliable proof that children wearing jackets would not have made similar progress without them or that the acceleration of development may be directly attributed to the jacket rather than traditional stimulation, which the children doubtless also received from their highly moti-

vated and involved families.

We are naturally interested in any new development which helps children with Down's Syndrome but we felt that it was irresponsible and premature to talk of "Miracle Cures" and to presume, as this article had, that hitherto there has been little hope for these children.

Maggie Emslie LCST Dip IPA
Director
Down's Children's Association
4 Oxford Street
London W1N 9FL

ALACs report: we shouldn't pay

I read with interest your article ("Blistering attack on ALACs", *Disability Now* February) having had first hand experience of the wheelchair service and the artificial limb service.

I largely agree with what is said in the report as quoted, but I note that among the 20 detailed recommendations for the wheelchair services is the supply of dual purpose powered wheelchairs financed from the £11 million savings and possibly by abating future increases in the Mobility Allowance. Here I must agree with Kath Savage in that "it is disabled people paying once again". It seems like a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

If the wheelchair service does supply dual purpose powered chairs in the future, which I think it should, I would most likely benefit. My wife Brenda would certainly benefit. But this should not happen at the expense of our future Mobility increases.

The Mobility Allowance has not kept up with the price increases of cars, petrol or car insurance as it is. My car is 7 years old. I would find it difficult to replace at the moment.

Like the vast number of disabled people, I am unemployed; my wife is also disabled and we have two boys aged 12 and 16 to look after. Like most people, the

Mobility Allowance tends to go on the electricity bill or new shoes for the kids; you cannot always use it for what it was intended if you live in the outside world away from the sheltered environment of some hostel.

I'm sure the Government and county councils save vast amounts of money when a disabled person sets up home to live on their own. This is the money that should be used to provide better wheelchairs, powered or otherwise, better access to buildings and so on. It should not come from those who are most in need of financial help, the disabled themselves.

B P Ferriday
5 Ash Grove
Coldbrook
Barry
S Glam CF6 7LS

... so much

Further to the letter from John Adams (*Disability Now*, March), I would urge all amputees to read the McColl Report (£12.60) which in my opinion should have been made available free of charge.

I cannot see how you can promote efficiency and cost effectiveness in the ALAC services without controlling the investment, research and development, as well as having a publicly accountable pricing policy.

How does this Government propose to remove the monopoly of manufacture, supply and repair by just 2 firms? There is no place for private profit of the kind found in this report, bearing in mind that of the 63,000 amputees, 78 per cent of all lower limb amputees are over 60. More than one-third of a million wheelchair users are over 70.

There have been no new contractors for 20 years. Hangers and Vessa have a 70 per cent monopoly and are part of Inter-Med which is a holding company for a British multinational, BTR. The DHSS contracts for 80 per cent of all the 6 firms producing limbs. Any talk of introducing competition under these circumstances is laughable.

The report notes that suppliers consistently earn more than the proposed rate of return, which is 7.5 per cent. For 3 of the past 5 years the average rate of return has been 10 per cent - 3 times the rate for manufacturing nationally! *The review proposes some 3.5 per cent.*

Everyone who relies on or works in the ALAC system should take note: there is talk of overstaffing in the report. I shudder at those words "businesslike efficiency" - usually a euphemism for cuts/job losses.

You cannot run the NHS or the ALACs like a branch of Sainsbury's. We are not just tins of baked beans; we are human beings with very special needs.

Cathy Wilson
Member of the National Association of Limbless Disabled
11 Dovey Street
Liverpool 8

Make the most of it

I was delighted to read in your February issue of the outstanding work being done by Dr Isherwood and colleagues at The Spastics Society's Douglas Arter Centre in Salisbury.

I do hope that resources can be made available to ensure that full advantage is taken of this progress in wheelchair design.

Sam Gallop
Honorary Chairman
Opportunities for the Disabled
1 Bank Buildings
Princes Street
London EC2R 8EU

He's planning for independence

I was interested in your feature on independent living (*Disability Now*, March). The story of John and Joan Peters was particularly relevant to my own experience.

Cerebral palsy has affected me since birth. I am currently studying for a BA degree in social sciences with the Open University and have passed the first 2 courses, "The handicapped person in the community" and "Special needs in education".

From the outset I had to consider the problem of coping with the amount of work involved. Volunteers were needed to take down my dictation. But now I am learning to use a BBC computer with the aim of being able to prepare my own work.

I am taking a year's sabbatical from study to pursue independent living. Recently I completed a "care proposal" covering my personal care needs and plans for the future.

The main area where I envisage difficulty is convincing the

North Herts Mirror on Sunday



Stuart Marshall at work.

"professionals" that my future plans are not unrealistic. It is often the case that they have a very negative attitude and tend to be over-protective towards those wishing to leave a sheltered environment.

Such a step involves a great deal of planning and co-ordination. Facilities and support services can vary greatly. In my view it is important that individuals take full responsibility for making their own decisions and for the consequences.

I am quite determined to use my Open University skills to help bring about a change in attitudes so that disabled people can have more control over their own lifestyles in today's "modern society".

Stuart Marshall
Hertfordshire Cheshire Home
Hitchin, Herts.

Cheerful tight-rope walker

I thought it might be helpful if I responded to Avril Stewart (*Disability Now*, April) about Broadstones and the services of The Spastics Society.

The special facility at Broadstones is *not* closing; in fact we are keen to enhance our services there. But it is true that there is a national shortage of occupational therapists and we are actively recruiting in an effort to keep the independent living programme going.

In the past 12 months, the Society has invested a further £130,000 to increase the staff of this progressive and forward-looking school leavers' unit. The present group of school leavers at Broadstones can further look

forward to moving to an imaginative and pioneering resource in Tiptree, Essex, where they will be living in ordinary housing in the heart of the community. This scheme has meant a heavy investment by the Society.

It takes a forward-looking organisation to pioneer new schemes and this has required commitment from the Executive Council, the Director and staff throughout the organisation. Furthermore, if we are able to continue to develop and attract funding from many sources, e.g. voluntary, DHSS (special funding), joint finance, local government and, not least, partnerships with local government, health and housing associations, we *must* continue to be a pioneering force. We state this clearly to the public, the Society's affiliated groups, the central Society staff and the users of our service.

This organisation has vast potential, particularly if it continues to develop new work. At the same time it must work sensitively and imaginatively within its present resources.

A difficult balancing act? Yes, but not one that depresses me as it appears to depress Avril Stewart.

Richard Redmond
Residential and Social Work Services Manager
The Spastics Society

That advert!

Several people have written in reply to Mr Molford's letter (*Disability Now*, March) which criticised the newspaper for printing a job advertisement from the Borough of Haringey for a secretary to a lesbian and gay men's sub-committee. Here are some comments - Editor

In an epoch when the civil rights of all individuals are under siege, including disabled people, women, gays, blacks, trades unionists and local councillors, would it not be better to seize the initiatives and opportunities given by unity and coalition, instead of exercising near-sighted prejudices and divisions?

As two "straight" people who have cp, we should also like to point out that to be gay is not something which is exclusive to the able-bodied in our society. There might just be some disabled gays too, Mr Molford.

Paul T Hancock
Sharon L. Kirlan-Hancock
31 White Tree Road
Henleaze, Bristol

I rather took exception to Mr Molford's view that "the paper is published for people who are not able to do things for themselves".

I work in the further education sector with profoundly handicapped 16-19 year-olds, none of whom are able to read this paper for themselves.

Alongside other members of the multi-disciplinary team, we are all working hard towards integration into normal community life. But we are none of us in a position to dictate our ideal community.

Mr Molford's use of the phrase "these kind of people" (referring to lesbian and gay members of our community) is a jolting reminder of how difficult it is for those of us who want things to be normal for our handicapped friends when we're up against discrimination from the very people (in this case a parent) who ought to know better.

Pat Brudenell RMN, RDTh, DipTh, AIST, Cert Ed
Lecturer
Park View Educational Unit
Borocourt Hospital
Wyfold, Reading

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Privatising social security just won't work!

Predictions that Statutory Sick Pay would work to the disadvantage of disabled people have been proved true. Linda Avery, The Spastics Society's benefits expert, explains

Last month saw the extension of employers' liability for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from the first 8 weeks of sickness, to 28 weeks.

Even before the scheme was introduced in 1983 The Spastics Society and many other organisations argued against the transfer of responsibility from the state to employers. We predicted that SSP would particularly disadvantage people with disabilities who are often channelled into part-time and/or low paid jobs: they would be likely not to receive correct payment, or no SSP at all, or even be sacked.

By contrast, the Government has persistently claimed SSP to have been a major success.

However, a new report published by the Disability Alliance ERA, Leicester Rights Centre and the Leicester City Council Low Pay Campaign, has produced evidence to prove all our worst suspicions and predictions were correct. The report highlights the problems of SSP by drawing on official studies and Hansard Reports and on the experience of trades unions, citizens advice bureaux and many other welfare rights agencies.

The figures show a high and unacceptable error rate in SSP payments due, largely, to ignorance on the part of employers. Between April '83 and February '84 total errors in all firms stood at 15.5 per cent; by March '84-August '84 this had risen to 17.6 per cent followed by a jump to 27.8 per cent by September '84-September '85.

To put these figures into context, *The Failure of Privatization* cites a report published last October by the Payroll Alliance which stated, "The error rate is appalling by normal standards; DHSS sources indicate that ... errors occur in some 70 per cent of smaller companies. A 12.5 per cent error rate is about average for large companies while a 25 per cent error rate is commonplace in medium sized organisations."

The Failure of Privatization also shows evidence that many claimants suffered financial hardship; were forced to rely on means-tested Supplementary Benefit - with all the usual problems of low take-up - and had difficulties transferring to the state operated sickness benefit.

ment. We share the desire to protect youngsters from the evil consequences of tobacco in all its forms and to dissuade adults from supplying it to them."

Health review

The Government is to carry out a comprehensive review of primary health care. Making the announcement on 21 April, Social Services Secretary Norman Fowler said that services provided outside hospital by family doctors, dentists, pharmacists and opticians and by others such as community nurses have never been extensively reviewed since the 1946 National Health Service Act, yet they account for nearly a third of total spending on the NHS.

A discussion document has been published which proposes the following changes:

- A good practice allowance for doctors providing the highest standards of care
- A new flexible retirement pension for doctors and a compulsory retirement age of 70
- Arrangements to compensate for the higher cost of a doctor's premises in inner cities
- Possibly lifting restrictions on advertising by dentists
- Recommendations to deal with the problem of unnecessary dental treatment.

The document also includes ways of improving the procedures for dealing with complaints against family practitioners and better informal conciliation arrangements for less serious complaints. The document proposes an independent study of primary care services in England, starting in one or two areas.

The Government intends that there should be wide consultation over the next year with voluntary bodies, statutory Health Service agencies and providers and users of the services. Norman Fowler emphasised that final decisions had not been taken.

The opposition immediately claimed that the Government's main aim is to save money.

Frank Dobson (Lab) said that



In some cases, employers simply refused to operate SSP, or to pay individual employees; alternatively, despite its illegality, some firms had actually sacked sick employees rather than pay their SSP.

The report confirms that those particularly at risk were em-

some of the proposals should be welcomed, especially those intended to provide patients with more information and greater choice. He said that the proposals on dentistry were unlikely to stop the soaring cost of dental treatment and the gradual disappearance of the NHS dental service.

He added that the general health of the British people will not be improved until there is a Government dedicated to eliminating poverty and unemployment, to improving safety and health at work and to providing decent housing and healthy food at prices all people can afford. Unless these things were achieved, he said, most of the propositions would have little impact on the health of the worst-off and the least healthy.

Drainage rates

Sir Gerald Vaughan (Conservative) has sponsored a Private Members Bill to give disabled people rebates on their water drainage rate. His Drainage Rates (Disabled Persons) Bill corrects an error in the Rating (Disabled Persons) Act 1978. This Act gave disabled people a right to rebates on their general rates but overlooked similar provisions for drainage rates.

Drainage rates are paid by disabled people living in areas such as the Fens and around large rivers like The Ouse and Severn.

Under the Bill, the rating authority will make a written note to the internal drainage board that it has allowed a rebate on the general rate to some disabled people. The drainage board will then be allowed to give a rebate.

It will also be possible for institutions occupied by disabled people to claim rebates.

Gerald Vaughan said that this would cover the provision of additional lavatories, bathrooms, garages and in some cases heating allowance.

Mr Michael Jopling, for the Government, welcomed the Bill as an opportunity to right an injustice that was inadvertently imposed on disabled people.

Sharron Saint Michael

ployees in low paid or part-time jobs, those in small firms and those not covered by occupational sick pay schemes.

While the report is valuable in providing evidence against the Government's claim to the success of SSP, its prime value is that it comes as a timely warning against further "privatization" of the welfare state. It shows how the Government has manipulated figures, ignored evidence of problems, and stifled debate in order to create a mythical success.

The major worry however is that SSP is only the first step along the privatization path. According to recent consultative documents and the Social Security Bill, in future the Government wants employers to take responsibility for Maternity Allowance payments and Family Income Supplement.

The authors of the report are to be congratulated not only for its readable style and useful figures but also for its timely re-

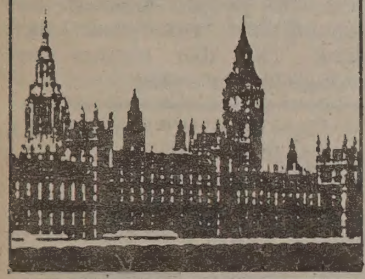
lease. Debate about SSP has been stifled: debate about the Social Security Bill has not. As the report says, "Privatization of social security ... replaces social security with private insecurity".

Our task now is to make sure this report comes to the attention of those engaged in debate about the Social Security Bill.

If you are concerned about the effects of privatization on people with disabilities, please write to your local MP. Explain that private pensions will be very difficult to obtain - or very expensive. Employers are already biased against people with disabilities and will assume they will have a poor sickness record; thus they are even more likely to discriminate against disabled employees. Ask your MP to read this report.

The Failure of Privatization in Social Security is now available from the Disability Alliance ERA, 25 Denmark Street, London WC2H 8NJ. £2.50, post free.

MONTH IN PARLIAMENT



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Protect youngsters from "evil" of tobacco

The Tobacco Products (Sales Restriction) Bill was discussed in the Commons on 18 April and some technical amendments were made to clarify and tidy up some of the clauses.

One was the powers of the court over tobacco vending machines. If it was proved that a vending machine was being used extensively by young people, the courts must order precautions to prevent the machine being used in this way or to have the machine removed.

The Bill also removes a defence now available to shopkeepers: that if they believe the tobacco product is being bought for someone else, they can sell to under-16s. When the Bill becomes law it will not be a question of who the tobacco is for, but who it is sold to.

During the Bill's third reading, many MPs were concerned about products such as Skoal Bandits which resemble a miniature tea bag and contain finely ground flavoured tobacco to suck. All the speakers welcomed broadening the scope of present legislation to make selling items such as Skoal Bandits to people under 16 illegal.

Summing up, Ray Whitney, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, said, "The Bill has secured a large measure of agree-

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Parents speak out on Conductive Education and The Spastics Society

1 Sandra Dalziel - "A first class education is available in the UK today"

In April's issue of *Disability Now* mention is made of the screening of "Standing up for Joe" (BBC TV, 1 April). As the mother of an 18-year-old athetoid son, there are a number of points I would like to make.

I was very moved by the devotion, not only of Joe's parents, but the whole staff at the Conductive Education centre in Budapest. I admire what is being done for 70 per cent of the handicapped children, but would very much have liked to see the other 30 per cent.

In Hungary you have to be able to walk in order to attend school at all. This puts enormous pressure on all to work together, whatever the cost. I do know those first few years of Railton's life would have been spent in great fear, whether or not he would make the grade in order to attend school. Social and other skills would have been neglected in order to concentrate on this one aspect.

Our own experience of Railton's schooling up to the age of 16 was excellent. In Inner London we were provided with first class all-round education and medical services second to none. I look back with contentment on those years knowing that the very best was done. We worked at a pace we could cope with; there was no special burden to get him walking before school, just a continual programme for him to reach his potential which we believe has made him the happy teenager he is today. Thankyou Thurlow Park School for physically handicapped

children.

The next point I have to mention is not so easy.

When Railton was due to leave school we felt as parents that too much pressure was put on us to "let our son go and grow up away from home."

No one expects us necessarily to push out our other 16-year-old children to make their own way in life. Yet we must pass on our handicapped youngsters to people who so often think they know more about them than the parents.

Our son went to a "further education" centre in a school run by The Spastics Society.

The months went so slowly. Railton was expected to completely change his way of life.

"We've got him too late", we were told. This was news to us, as we were under the impression that our son's placement was for further education.

No account seemed to be taken of the years of education he had already had. When we explained how our son was able to function on the floor, dressing, playing, getting round the house on his knees, the reaction was "Only babies crawl on the floor. He's got to grow up now". Into a wheelchair he went; no bars to pull himself up by, no aids to help him stand. We wondered why we had bothered to keep him mobile.

The school was run by "policy", and if it wasn't their "policy" it just wasn't on.

At the same time lip service was given to the idea that parents were involved in the



Railton Dalziel works with his woodwork jobber and tool box.

education process. But when we did try to get involved we were made to feel like little children interfering.

Some concessions were grudgingly made but over the next few months Railton became withdrawn, suspicious, with a feeling of failure. We began to dread each new day. What had happened to us? Will no one listen? Have we no experience of our child? Are we difficult people? Do we expect too much?

All these questions tormented us - and him - so that in the end we withdrew him from the school. This, we were told, was the worst thing we had ever done, and we would regret it all our lives.

In spite of the difficulties sur-

rounding this decision, the authorities at the Inner London Education Authority were more than helpful. They allowed Railton to return temporarily to his old day school.

In a few weeks his confidence had returned, and a much smaller unit was found which really was "further education" with all the youngsters there of similar age. It was nearer home and he was encouraged to feel that he could come home at weekends without it being a burden.

In fact he loves the new situation and now doesn't wish to come home every weekend, and we are thrilled about that, realising that he feels confident enough to cope and enjoy life without the constant support of

family.

This unit where he is now had not previously had much experience of athetoid youngsters, and so were willing to listen.

What was threateningly put to us as the worst thing we had ever done in our lives is turning out to be the best we ever did.

A first class education and all that that means for the severely handicapped child is available in the UK today if you are willing to look for it, stand up for your rights and believe in yourself as a parent.

As a parent you know your child better than most, and know what you can cope with, without putting too much pressure on the family unit.

We are a happy family of 5, each doing our separate thing - which leads me to mention a programme later in the same week where a child was taken to Philadelphia for intensive "training". The training was so intense that the older sister had to withdraw from the family and be looked after by grandma.

With the facilities available in this country such extreme action has not been necessary in our case and, if anything, brother and sister have both benefitted from being brought up with a handicapped brother.

If the 2 TV programmes have left me in any way uneasy, it is because I want everyone to know that we - and even more so our son - have done our very best. Do people look at me pushing the wheelchair and think "Did that mother do enough for her child?"

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DN1

2 Hilda Davies - "Parents will feel cheated"

Freddie Green was right (*Disability Now*, April). Hundreds of parents will feel cheated about the availability of Conductive Education for their children. I am sure also that his article will do nothing to allay their fears.

He writes about the media coverage being "emotionally overburdened and lacking in true substance". To parents of a severely brain-damaged child those words would be totally irrelevant. To them, this treatment, done with the commitment shown on the film, would be wonderful, something to be sought after and tried.

"The Society has not engaged in a silent conspiracy" he writes. Now I am a founder-member of The Spastics Society so hardly likely to "knock" its work, but even I have not heard about the numbers of babies and children treated for 8 hours per day, and more, in CE within the Society's establishments.

"Papers within the Society" and CE being "represented at conferences", mean nothing to society at large or parents.

Generally speaking, in this country parents with no medical knowledge succumb to the trained professionals who frequently - as far as cp is concerned - fail to understand and work with the deep knowledge parents have of their child's reactions, and the emotional driving force that sends some parents to Philadelphia or Hungary in search of help. The Spastics Society was founded on this force, and Bob Geldolf knows how to put it to good use.

I am well aware of the differ-



Chris and Hilda Davies.

ences in the physical and mental progress with cerebral palsied youngsters. I went through great mental trauma because my son's physical progress with the accepted types of therapy was nil, and was, on several occasions, abandoned. I felt that intense, prolonged and - very important - enjoyable therapy could have worked.

The Peto Institute looked to me to be working on the right lines. If my son was 5 years old I would join them.

How does Mr Green suggest you stop parents feeling "passive recipients of third rate services"?

Many parents of cp babies and children have no knowledge of the work of The Spastics Society.

Until the Society gets its message across to the general public via the media, and explains its financial limitations and the need for government funding for Conductive Education, and makes sure that the professionals within its ranks try to understand the deep and profound anxieties of parents, this search for a better treatment method will continue and will be publicised to the detriment of the Society and its funding.

(sic)

by Simon Crompton
and Alan Durant

Pygmies

1986 could be the year in which little people come out and assert themselves. Following a recent report in *The Guardian* of the cancellation of a dwarf-throwing contest in Germany due to the protests of "small people", and the talk about "pushy midgets" (Nigel Dempster and *DN's* Watch It! column) comes an intriguing headline in *Charity* magazine's diary: "Drugs—the giant problem being fought by keen, willing and brave pygmies". The words evoked pictures of hordes of diminutive Central African tribesmen with blow-pipes and poison darts, abandoning their tropical rainforests to embark on a heroic crusade to cut down to size the wicked drug-trafficking giants of the western world. . . . On further reading, however, I was disappointed to find no mention of little people at all (unless Pete Townshend has shrunk considerably).

AIDS

The *General Practitioner* reports the story of a doctor explaining the role of occupational therapists within the Health Service. One of their responsibilities, he said, was to provide aids for disabled people. "I didn't realise the health service practiced euthenasia," piped up a wit from the fifth form. Which only goes to illustrate an increasing confusion between AIDS and aids. This is having some serious effects on disability services. The Scottish Mobile Aids Centre had a distinct shortage of visitors until the Scottish Council on Disability realised that people were worried about catching something. It's now called the Mobile Advice Centre. Similarly, aids centres in Leeds, Leicester, Sheffield and Swindon have changed their names to something less capable of misinterpretation, like Disabled Living Service or Independent Living Centre. Meanwhile The Spastics Society is sticking resolutely to Visiting Aids Centre—although that is written small on the side of the trailer, beneath a big yellow "Exhibition".

Secretive

Tam Dalyell, MP, Labour's champion of the Belgrano affair and the Clive Ponting case, was spotted amongst the thronging multitude at the lobby for Tom Clarke's Disabled Persons' Bill (see page 1)—a frenetic figure scuttling back and forth across the central lobby encumbered with a pile of boxes spilling paper. I wasn't close enough to see if they were stamped "Top Secret". *The Conqueror* logbook maybe?

Chauvinism

Chauvinism cries of "Bloody women drivers!" and "Typical of a woman to stall at the traffic lights!" have long been countered by statistics showing that women have fewer car accidents than men (they just cause them, cynics say). But confirmed MCPs may be heartened by *International Rehabilitation Medicine's* report that disabled women have more accidents than similarly disabled men.

Legalise pre-embryo research says Tory MP

A booklet which argues the case for legalising pre-embryo research into congenital handicap was published recently.

Written by the Conservative MP, Peter Thurnham, and his wife Sarah, it explains the issues surrounding pre-embryo research which were raised by the Warnock Report and Enoch Powell's Unborn Child (Protection) Bill last year.

It discusses hereditary handicaps caused by chromosome abnormalities or defective genes, the different types of pre-birth diagnoses available to parents, and the alternatives of care or abortion. It also explains *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) and why the techniques need to be improved.

The Thurnhams want the Government to introduce legislation on the lines of the Warnock Report recommendations, i.e. that research involving the human pre-14-day embryo should be permitted but strictly regulated by a licensing authority. In the meantime they think a Government working party should be set up to look at areas in which

beneficial research should be encouraged and to monitor the work of the existing Voluntary Licensing Authority.

"We believe that pre-embryo research, limited along the lines suggested by Warnock, is morally and ethically just, as well as practically beneficial", they say. "A law banning such research, and hostile to IVF, would be a disaster to many ordinary people, both the 1 in 10 couples who have difficulty in conceiving, and the 1 in 50 couples at risk of giving birth to a handicapped child."

The Thurnhams are founder members of PROGRESS, Campaign for Research into Reproduction, which supports and protects controlled research into human reproduction and the prevention of infertility, miscarriage and congenital handicap.

The Spastics Society supports PROGRESS. When Nature Fails—Why Handicap? costs £1.25 from the Conservative Political Centre Bookshop, 32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HH.



Leon Brittain — striped suit, spotted tie.

The "in" place to shop

It might come as some surprise, but Princess Margaret, the Prime Minister and most of the Cabinet all wear clothes from The Spastics Society's shops.

It's true nonetheless—at least of their puppets used in Central Television's award-winning, satirical show *Spitting Image*.

The programme's costume designer Sue Gibson regularly visits The Spastics Society shop in Morning Lane, Hackney, to pick up clothes for the lifesize puppets. She'll then adapt them so that the puppeteers can get inside.

In the programme shown on 27 April, Glenys Kinnock's clothes came from the Morning Lane shop, as did Imelda Marcos's fur coat and loud tiger print dress.

A sketch about the pop group The Who and the Swinging Sixties made use of some dated gear and flared trousers Sue Gibson rooted out.

"But you also find classy stuff—like Burberry raincoats and Yves Saint Laurent clothes," she says. "You'd be surprised what trends are giving away."

"The staff are very helpful, and if you ask for anything they try and help you find it," she says. Which is just as well, since Sue is often on a last minute dash-round on the Saturday to find costumes for the next day's show!

The next series of *Spitting Image* starts in mid-August.

Glenn Pearson is free

A deaf and dumb man who was sent to prison and a mental hospital for allegedly stealing £5 and 3 light bulbs has been released.

33-year-old Glenn Pearson, whose case was highlighted in March's *Disability Now*, had been deemed unfit to plead in court in November last year, which left a Crown Court judge with no alternative but to remand him.

Following a campaign by Glenn Pearson's parents, who travelled to see him daily, people in his village and his solicitor, a tribunal issued a discharge order.



Gary, 9½, has a deteriorating physical disability which will make walking increasingly difficult, and mental handicap. His social worker, Liz, says: "He comes and asks for a cuddle—you can get some response from him because he talks so much. When there's something he wants he's determined to get it! He's got no fears. We've just started swimming... He can't walk. He can crawl, just as fast, but he walks with calipers/gaiters... You need masses of energy to keep up with him..."



Laura, 6, has cerebral palsy with mental handicap. Her social worker, Kathy, says: "You cannot help but love Laura. You know it's not her fault that anything that she does that you find difficult to cope with is not because she's naughty but because of her physical condition. She's quite determined... and she's receptive to you—she likes to have a cuddle and to play and she'll respond to you... she loves music. For me, it's her winsome chattiness and babbling that's very attractive..."

They need a family—now

Gary and Laura are two of the children who will be meeting prospective parents this month at a day-long "playgroup" session organised by Parents for Children, the adoption agency which specialises in placing disabled children.

The playgroup idea, launched last year, has turned the routine of adoption upside down. It introduces prospective parents to the children and their professional helpers at the earliest possible time and allows them to get to know the children as people. Then interested families work together as a group as well as individually to prepare themselves for their new role.

"It is hard to describe children with disabilities without sounding very negative and pinning labels on them which hide their

uniqueness," says Hedi Argent, one of the agency's social workers. "By arranging for prospective parents to meet the children at an early stage, we hope that they will be able to see both the reality of their disabilities and their appeal."

Last year all 5 children in the playgroup found parents plus 2 others as a result of the publicity.

This year the playgroup is on 17 May. Parents for Children invite families who are interested to contact them. They may be one-parent families, older couples, divorced people or families who already have many children, but they must live within a 100 mile radius of London.

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Minister for the disabled says ALACs must be improved

Minister for the Disabled, Tony Newton, has said he is determined to achieve improvements in the present artificial limb and appliance services in England and Wales. He was speaking at a one-day conference on the McColl Report organised by *Therapy Weekly* on 11 April.

He told the conference that there was considerable scope for improvement. The McColl Report should act as an agenda for the task, he said, and changes should take place quickly.

However, he stressed that before any recommendations are followed through there will be a consultation period. Interested parties are asked to write to the DHSS as soon as possible.

Already there have been some changes. A new Disablement Services Division of the DHSS has been set up and a new general manager, Ian Burns, has been appointed. He will be responsible for the operation of existing services and the development of services following the report. All ALAC staff will be responsible to him.

Steven Bradshaw, director of the Spinal Injuries Association, said that disabled people should be involved at every level of the service. He wanted disabled people trained as specialists in this field along with specialist therapists.

A survey conducted by the SIA in 1981 found that not one tetraplegic member was happy with the DHSS electric wheelchairs.

Steven Bradshaw criticised the present appointment and transport system saying that the

Jeannie Ryan reports on a major conference on the McColl Report held last month in London



NHS practice of treating patients' time as expendable was not acceptable.

Elizabeth Fanshawe, director of the Disabled Living Foundation, argued that the skills and experience of the customer should be combined with the skills of the professionals if improvements are to take place. She pointed out that therapists need adequate training if they are to give a good prescription for a wheelchair.

She also commented on the lack of research compiled by ALACs, for example the long-term effects of pushing a wheelchair or wearing artificial limbs, and the design of new equipment.

The DHSS has already established a wheelchair training group which has researched and reviewed the existing information available to therapists, and produced a bibliography.

From a survey of occupational therapy and physiotherapy schools, it discovered that the time spent on teaching students about the selection and prescription of wheelchairs varied from 15 minutes to several hours. As a result it has compiled audio-visual material for student training.

June Sutherland, head OT at Westminster Hospital, London, and a member of the wheelchair training group, reported that a wheelchair training course for selected qualified therapists in the SW Thames region was planned for June. The therapists who attend the course will then return to their own district and educate fellow professionals.

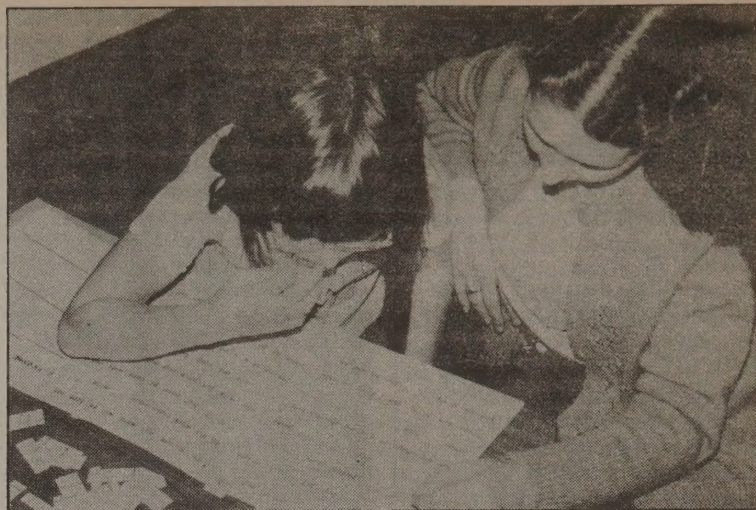
Professor McColl told the conference that the money, buildings and people are all available to improve ALAC services.

"We have to work together to provide a better service," he said.

Comments on the McColl Report should be sent to Mr M J Harley, DHSS, 14 Russell Square, London WC1 5EP.

The bibliography of wheelchair information is available from Janet Wells, Training Officer, SW Thames Regional Health Authority, Regional Education Office, 61 Glenburnie Road, London SW17 7DJ.

Copies of the McColl Report are available from the DHSS Leaflets Unit, Canons Park Government Buildings, Honey Pot Lane, Stanmore, Middx. Vol 1, £4.60; Vol 2, £8.00.



Learning to read at The Spastics Society's Beech Tree School (South).

People with mental handicaps need books urgently

People with mental handicaps are a neglected market as far as book publishers are concerned. This has been the experience of Jenny Lewis, parent of a mentally handicapped young woman who also happens to be a member of Leicestershire County Council. Her discussions with the Council led to a national conference hosted by the County Council in March which became the springboard for further action.

The conference (which was heavily oversubscribed) was attended by librarians, social workers, parents, educationalists and other professionals reflecting the very widespread interest and concern about this issue. The speakers – a parent, a special education adviser, a librarian, a lecturer and author specialising in this area, and three publishers – were an indication of the very diverse interests which need to be involved in future activities.

Issues which emerged during the course of the day reflected many of those facing health, social services and education authorities.

A more widespread recognition of the importance and desirability of integration in day and residential services was mirrored by discussions on how

we can make libraries and other sources of reading materials more accessible to mentally handicapped people.

Linked to this was how to avoid creating another specialised and therefore rather segregated service which would be unlikely to cater for the individual needs of people with mental handicaps. Their interests, wishes and needs for written material will be as diverse as the rest of society. It will be crucial to ensure that we don't provide one single range of "special" materials which are the only resource we can offer people with learning difficulties.

It was suggested that many different people could be involved in producing materials in addition to publishers: a transport authority, for example, might be asked to produce a simple guide to using its public transport facilities. This sort of solution helps people with mental handicaps to use the community's facilities without resort to expensive and "special" publishing resources.

That said, there is a wide market for specialist publishing too which ranges from materials for skills training or obtaining information to general leisure. Many delegates felt strongly that people with mental handicaps should experience the pure joy of books, which they took for granted, for themselves. Learning was important but so was leisure and pleasure.

At the end of the conference, delegates came up with a series of practical recommendations:

- a national working party to be set up to explore the need for books and to stimulate publishing projects
- professional bodies concerned with people with mental handicap should be involved in determining the need, type and content of books in their particular sphere of interest

- the conference organisers will act as a focal point to receive information and suggestions for further action

- one organisation should become the national focal point for collecting information and materials for use by young people and adults with mental handicaps.

Nominations please!

Alison Wertheimer
Campaign for People with Mental Handicap

Anyone interested in becoming involved should contact Stephen Hoy, Principal Librarian (Special Client Groups), Leicestershire Libraries and Information Service, Thames Tower, 2 Navigation Street, Leicester LE1 3TZ. Tel: (0533) 538921 ext 3564

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The Alpha Advisory Committee is The Spastics Society's Advisory Committee of cerebral palsied persons.

The Committee is seeking a third Development and Research Officer to put into practice the aims of the Committee, and in particular to assist in the development of Alpha Committees and groups at regional and local levels.

This particular post will cover the Society's London, South East and East regions. The base is open to negotiation.

We are looking for a man or woman with personal experience of disability and preferably of cerebral palsy. The successful candidate should have organizational ability, and be able to manage their own work without close supervision. Community development or group work skills would be an advantage. The post will involve considerable travelling, evening and weekend work and periods away from home.

The post is initially funded until 31st March 1987 but it is hoped that it will be established. We will be pleased to consider applications from suitable candidates qualifying for assistance with the MSC Sheltered Placement Scheme.

For further details and an application form, please contact Mr. Nigel Smith, Regions Services Development Manager, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ (01-636 5020). Closing date: 30th May 1986.

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Chairman visits Australian spastics societies

New CPO is launched down-under

An Australian version of the British voluntary agency, Cerebral Palsy Overseas, was launched in Melbourne on 13 March.

The president of Cerebral Palsy Overseas Inc is Richard Gray, general manager of the Spastics Society of Victoria, and its committee includes Derek Lancaster-Gaye, director of CPO and Dr Simon Haskell, Dean of Burwood College of Special Education in Melbourne and formerly a principal psychologist at The Spastics Society.

Nigel Tuckett



Derek Lancaster-Gaye (left) and Richard Gray.

"The establishment of this new organisation is part of CPO's plan to regionalise its activities", said Derek Lancaster-Gaye. "The Australian CPO will concentrate on practical projects in SE Asia and the Pacific. There will be close co-ordination between the two organisations."

CPO Australia's first project will be to send a professional team to Fiji in November where they will work with parents and professionals.

The inauguration of CPO Australia was attended by Mrs Joyce Smith, chairman of The Spastics Society, who took the opportunity to make a 3-week tour of spastics societies in Perth, Adelaide, New South

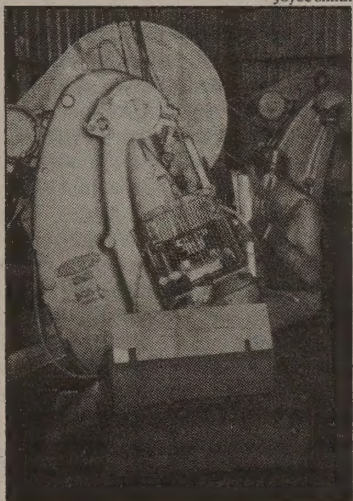
Wales and Queensland. It was the first time a chairman of The Spastics Society had visited Australia.

She saw organisations started by parents at much the same time as The Spastics Society and now facing similar problems - rising costs, increasing demand for services, and the need to develop new services and ideas.

"There is some fantastic work going on and some beautiful residential accommodation", she said. She was particularly impressed by a residential centre in Melbourne which is designed like a star, with public rooms in the centre and a small community of 5 bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, sitting and dining room in each spur, each with its own front door.

"It was superb", she said. "There was a huge work centre next door and a mini-

Joyce Smith



Heavy machinery being used at the work centre in Perth.

Thorngrove (a horticultural centre run by the Society) that had been inspired by Thorngrove."

In Queensland she saw a luxurious holiday bungalow complex with a swimming pool and a highly efficient work centre with a large showroom. "The garden tables and chairs made out of plastic tubing were excellent quality and I saw them and other products from the work centre all over Australia," she said. "The workers are not severely handicapped as they must be able to transport themselves to work. Eventually they move on to open employment."

Funding for the Australian spastics societies comes mainly from the Miss Australia Quest, the annual competition to find a Miss Australia, and from federal funding. There is little fundraising and no affiliated groups of parents and volunteers.

"The drawback to relying so much on federal money for residential care is that the societies are tied by a federal law which emphasises nursing care, and this has been a barrier to moving disabled people into the community," said Mrs Smith. "The societies are pressing for a change in the law."

She also noticed that attitudes towards disabled people varied from one society to another. In Perth she saw how disabled people were treated as individuals, free to form relationships and have sexual experiences like anyone else.

Child's wooden rocker and tables and chairs for home or garden were on display at the workcentre in Brisbane (right).



Mrs Joyce Smith with Richard Gray meets Geraldine and Kimray Ardell who, with their two teenage children, foster 4 disabled children in Melbourne - including Tina (third from left) who played Annie in Annie's Coming Out.



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Music can meet special needs as well as attracting universal responses

David Ward argues that music can benefit everyone; it is also fun

Not long ago I met a professional violinist who balances his stressful life in the symphony orchestra with visits to special schools where he "plays to the children". I asked him why he felt this was important and why he felt he had something special to offer them.

"They're so responsive," he said at first. But when pressed a little more, he concluded that perhaps the most important thing was to establish friendship through music.

This struck me forcibly.

A few years ago, I conducted some research into children's judgments of musical performances. This research confirmed for me the fact that young children - including those who are disabled, and especially cerebral palsied children - know a good performance from a poor one.

At our music college we had built up a training programme which involved all the student instrumentalists in devising a presentation to children with learning difficulties in their own classrooms. We noticed that the better players received more attentive and absorbed attention than poorer players. Then, on one memorable occasion, we took Latif Khan - the prestigious *tabla* player - to the school. Latif, with only a few words of English, held a group of 12-year-old children for an hour. Their attention was complete and they were enticed into quite difficult rhythmic activities at a level well beyond what we expected of them.

Since these children had had no previous experience of listening to real live performances, and since they certainly had not been "educated" to make artistic judgments of this kind, one might suspect some universal qualities to be at work here.

In order to try to discover what these qualities are, the research included an attempt to find a definition of "good per-

formance" by asking some eminent musicians to try to provide an analysis. Singer Jane Manning felt that the following qualities are important: care, commitment, conviction, control, command and concentration. Composer Kenneth Jones felt that the goal of living might be to "find an

lives have been notoriously austere.

Of course, musical experience is not limited to listening; in creative and creative work, the children can discover form, consonance and dissonance, tension and resolution. These qualities are not real but imagined, and as

Chris Schwartz



David Ward on the tambour making music with pupils from Dame Hannah Rogers School in Devon.

inner harmony and meaning in our existence" and that in music one also finds true intonation, the balanced phrase, the balanced proportion of one note to another.

One might suppose, then, that children with special education needs, whose lives may be especially chaotic and unbalanced, can sense in a good performance some qualities they might wish for themselves. In a similar way, the warmth and cosy security one senses in a story like *Wind in the Willows* also "strikes a chord" in many children whose

such remain to some extent *within the bounds of control* in the children's minds. It is especially in this sense, I believe, that music can be therapeutic.

Music is essentially an activity of the imagination and is available and accessible to all people, irrespective of age, intelligence and background. Humans perceive sonorous sensations as restful/restless, rough/smooth, long/short, growing/diminishing, hurrying/dawdling, etc. Young children happily place these perceptions in metaphorical contexts "like animals moving", "like monsters", "space-ships", "ghosts". So we can use music to "tell stories", to stimulate children's natural joy in poetic discovery.

Music can be - if we so wish it - the most orderly of the arts. Musical tones stand in fairly precise mathematical relationships to each other; rhythms can have a symmetrical and mathematical logic. It is worth noting that the perception of pitch and rhythm depends on a kind of mathematical perception (eg doh stands in a 3/2 relationship to soh in terms of frequency) but this musical-mathematical perception is not a fully conscious one.

Whatever the mystery of musical perception, we have the possibility of the discovery of logic and order and in this discovery we tend to feel a particular sense of satisfaction, pleasure, completion.

It is a hard fact that some individuals with very limited intellectual abilities are better at perceiving musical relationships than (say) some university professors. There is, therefore, a case to be made for the extra provision of tuition for musical special needs. This should be included in the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs if we are really keen about the assessment of the whole child rather than categorising handicaps.

Realistically speaking, the special-needs child who is also

musically gifted is not uncommon, and whilst s/he should be given extra help, it is really the rest of special-needs children we should devote some attention and energy to.

Many people would hold that "enjoyment" is the most important thing music can provide. This is, of course, correct, but we should perhaps try to be more explicit. In musical experience, we have the possibility of the "AAH" experience (nicely described by Arthur Koestler) ie the experience of beauty (which pleases). This goes beyond just having a good time. There is a deeper, reflective aspects to this experience which puts us in touch with the inner harmony and meaning mentioned earlier.

In the experience of many music teachers and therapists, there has been a constant affirmation and re-affirmation that music can make a unique contribution to the education and well-being of special-needs children. Sometimes, the contribution is quite specific and noticeable.

A few years ago, I had an amazing improvising group at the Dame Hannah Rogers school (Devon). Eight cerebral palsied children met with me to make music on Wednesday evenings. These children could improvise most sensitively and intensively, sometimes for as long as 45 minutes non-stop. Our style was usually "avant garde" - no tune, no beat. Sometimes we played "jazz". These sessions were for me quite musically significant and among the best I ever took part in (including professional improvising sessions). At that time, the children came voluntarily to the music-room; it was noticeable that the keenest participants were all seriously speech-handicapped.

Similar "free" improvisation was used by the late Margaret Johnson with children with hearing difficulties in a difficult London school. For some months she patiently and faithfully waited for these huge boys to vent their mostly aggressive feelings on the instruments in an improvised music room which



Poised to come in - a pupil from Valence School with a handchime at the festival.

was formerly a cloakroom (complete with coat pegs and exposed heating pipes). Eventually the boys discovered the need for some "techniques" in order to play the music they liked. Gradually the sometimes crazy improvisations moved towards more composed and directed work; perhaps this was indicative of their desire for more order and form in their lives.

Some musical elements serve



David Ward and accordion with children

particular needs; others attract particular and possibly universal responses - eg the Swanee (slide) Whistle is funny, the accordion stimulates physical action, the cello tends to sedate. Certain "dotted" rhythms seem to stimulate lively action whilst others (slow six-eights) may have a soothing effect. No-one has taught the children to respond in these ways; there seem to be innate, universal tendencies in us to respond similarly to certain musical instruments.

In some cases, music has a "carrying-forward" effect: it seems to aid fluency. Many teachers are aware of the child who hardly speaks but who can sing through the verse of a nursery-rhyme. Similarly, stutters can often function better when singing or reciting.

No wonder, then, that the idea of music as therapy has developed. Whether we are teachers, therapists or entertainers, we really believe that the music we do with our children is somehow beneficial. We may have no neat theories as to how and why. We know, however, immediately if our performance or activity is right. A response to the "right" activities is quite clear - much more so than with so-called normal children. And we ourselves probably need the feedback of enjoyment and success experienced when our activity works well.

Certainly in my own case I feel the sense of musical friendship my orchestral violinist was talking about. Usually this friendship extends beyond the confines of the music session; with a few children it is reserved for the intimacy of the session itself.

In the process of successful activity one feels a sense of agreement, of entering into a contract of communication of a very special kind. Even if there is no transfer of "socialisation" beyond the music session, it seems worthwhile. For a few, Music-time may be the only time in the week when such feelings are experienced.

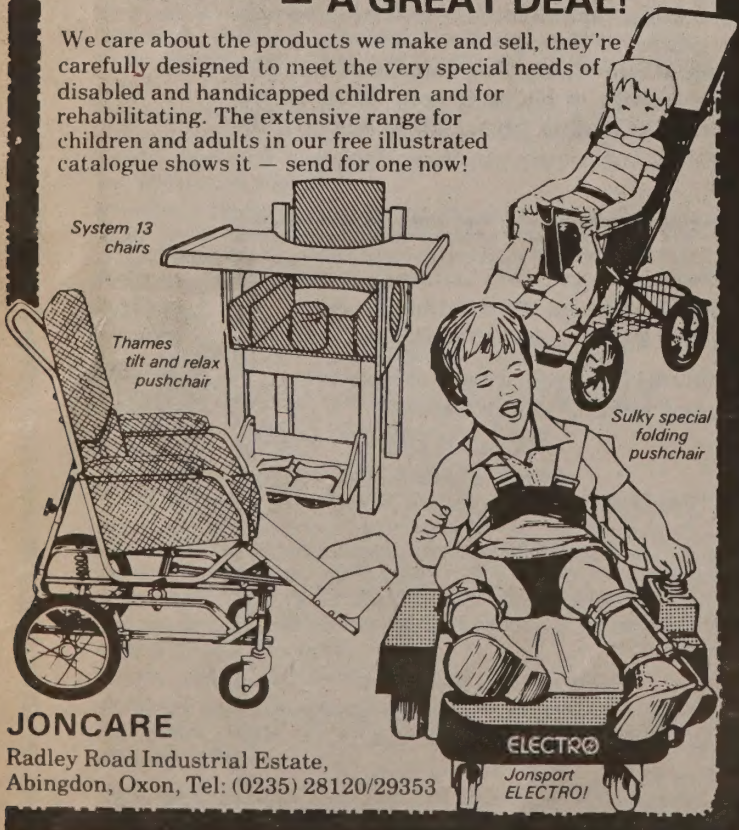
The nicest thing about my music session was once told me by a house-parent at the Dame Hannah Rogers school. As she was trying valiantly to wake Peter, he asked what day it was. "Friday," she replied. "Oh goody," he said, "Friday - chips and music."

David Ward is senior lecturer in the Music Department at Dartington College of Arts, Devon, where he is responsible for special needs work and also for higher degree tuition. Dr Ward has lectured widely and presently is visiting Atelier tutor to the Orff Institute's German Summer Course.

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From Bunsen burner tubing to an annual music festival

Sandy Andrews describes the growth of music at a special needs school

For almost three years I have been developing music at Thomas Delarue School within the creative arts department.

In fact my background is fine art painting, and when I started at Delarue I had no experience of teaching my own subject to disabled students, let alone music. But I found that there was virtually no music in the school and with a great deal of support I decided to give it a try.

We started with a few, small, broken individual chime bars found in a tea chest which were repaired with Bunsen burner tubing - a bright idea suggested by my eldest son's violin teacher.

Within 3 weeks of the beginning of my first term I attended a 3-day course on music and handicap organised jointly by the Society of Musicians and the Association for the Mentally Handicapped. It gave me the confidence to get started. It also helped me to understand how to pitch and pace musical activities and introduced me to some basic instruments. We watched videos of innovatory work in the field and we had supervised practical experience, working with the students of the school where the course was held.

Back at Delarue, the Friends generously bought us our first instruments including a synthesizer and an invaluable set of handchimes. Norman Dannet from the London Music Shop gave a free music workshop for interested staff. He introduced me to ideas such as sound play-alongs and sound illustrations for poems and pictures.

One of my earliest sessions used the simple idea of a storm. Each student in the group had an instrument and made an entrance at a given point. The sound started calmly and quietly but it became faster and louder reaching a final crescendo. To help with unison I drew a line on the blackboard and traced my finger along it. Different instruments joined in at the points shown and the volume increased as the line went higher (see left).

Another early idea was to explore sea sounds. We discovered that a *gato* drum (with wooden bars of different lengths) made a watery bubbly noise; a *guiro* (a cylindrical drum with slashes down the side which you scratch with a stick) became the sound of a crab scuttling away. Tiny silvery fishes were represented by finger cymbals and Indian bells. We used bottles filled with

water and pebbles in tubes as well as *maracas* (shakers) to create the sound of waves on the shore. At this time music lessons took place in the art studio and the instruments were stored in an annexe.

During the first music course I had seen videos showing how music was used with hearing impaired students. These ideas were re-introduced at a workshop given by Clive and Carol Robbins in London. Their work was inspiring and as a result our teacher of deaf children and I began teaching music to our hearing impaired students.

I was fascinated by the idea that all these students had some residual hearing and that we were educating minds unused to listening. The Beethoven Trust Fund for Deaf Children donated a set of large, resonant chime bars to the school.

By now I had a music room and with the help of other members of staff I had started a percussion orchestra. Clive and Carol Robbins had shown us a way of writing music on large charts giving each note a colour and triangles, bells, etc a symbol. To begin with we used music from a *Garden of Bell Flowers* but we have since branched out into carols and improvised pieces.

Our orchestra now has 20 students and they give up their spare time to rehearse. We have added a glockenspiel, xylophones and a metallophone which are played by students who can read music. The piano is played either by a member of staff or, increasingly, by a student, so chart-pointing and time-keeping is becoming quite complex.

The orchestra plays regularly at end of term assemblies and performs at an annual special schools music festival which we hosted this year.

We have used both the synth-

esizer and percussion instruments to improvise accompaniment for shadow theatre workshops held in school. Themes have been as diverse as "Halloween", "Cold", "Fireworks", "Krishna" and "Dragon". Recently I have held workshops on *Gamelan* music (traditional music from Java) using pentatonic scales on the pitched percussion instruments.

David Ward, who ran a day's workshop during the second music and handicap course I attended, has more than anybody influenced the philosophy underlying my approach to music.

Music is an important activity that can offer many sensory experiences which a disabled child may have missed. The instruments themselves are good to look at; they have tactile qualities including their vibrations; and a good quality instrument is satisfying to play and to hear.

But above all, music is made for its own sake and the underlying benefits that might occur do so because of the discipline, rigour and absorption the activity demands. And of course, it should go without saying - making music is great fun.

Sandy Andrews is head of the creative arts department at The Spastics Society's Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, Kent.

Norman Dannet, London Music Shop Ltd, 39 Coldharbour Lane, London SE5. Tel: 01-737 2468. Instruments can be purchased at a 33 per cent discount. Garden of Bell Flowers by Herbert and Gayle Levin is distributed in the UK by Alfred A Kalmus, 213 Fareham Street, London W1. £4.20. Also available from Nordoff-Robbins Therapy Centre, address on the right. £4.20 plus p&p.

Information

The Music Advisory Service of the Disabled Living Foundation offers information to disabled people and those involved with disabled people and can tell you what is available in your part of the country. It liaises with organisations and individuals involved in music and disability; investigates new developments; and organises talks and seminars. (The next conference is 15 November - "Deafness: No Handicap to Music?" - at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.)

Twenty information sheets are available from the Music Advisory Service, covering areas such as training in music therapy; employment opportunities for musicians with disabilities; where to go for local music contacts. For a list of these and a general leaflet on the work of the Service, please write, enclosing a sae, to Daphne Kennard, Music Advisory Service, Disabled Living Foundation, 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU. Tel: 01-289 6111.

The Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Centre offers one-year diploma courses in music therapy and runs occasional weekend courses for anyone interested in finding out more about music therapy. It runs classes for handicapped children (both at the centre and in schools in the London area). Write to the Nordoff-Robbins Therapy Centre Ltd, 3 Leighton Place, London NW5 2QL. Tel: 01-267 6296.

Courses in music therapy are also available at: Bristol Music Therapy Centre, Brompton Hospital, Charlton Road, BS19 6JH. Tel: (0272) 500500

The British Society for Music Therapy, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, The Barbican, London EC2Y 8DT. Tel: 01-628 2571

The Roehampton Institute of Higher Education, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PU. Tel: 01-878 5132.



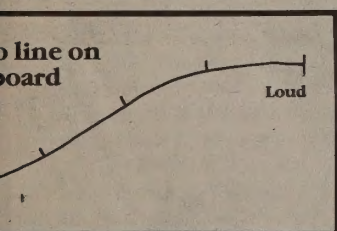
ame Hannah Rogers School.
Richard Ansett



(left) and Philip Bull, Delarue
g at the festival.



Thames Delarue School.



o line on
board



percussion group from Bower Grove School, Maidstone.

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SCOTTISH NAIDEX '86

Sue Smith samples the costly delights of her first NAIDEX

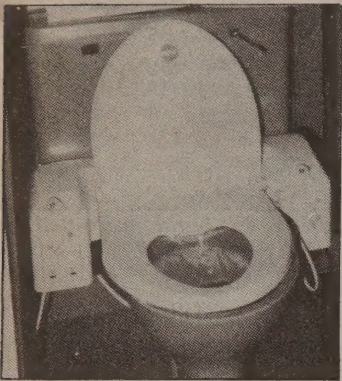
The new Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow where Scottish NAIDEX was held last month is a futuristic building on the bank of the River Clyde close to Glasgow's busy city centre. It has excellent access and parking facilities and no stairs or difficult corridors to negotiate.

Never having been to a

NAIDEX exhibition before, I was impressed by the number of people who had come to see the show – the largest display of aids and equipment for people with disabilities ever seen in Scotland – and with the opportunities to try out so much equipment. I also liked the friendly and helpful service offered by most of the exhibition representatives –

although one or two were off-hand and didn't seem too interested in selling their products.

One cannot do full justice to an exhibition like this in one day, so I have concentrated on a few, mainly new, items which I think would help people with disabilities and their families who live at home.



National Beauty Shower from Inva-Dex, tel: (0298) 2365.

Bathrooms

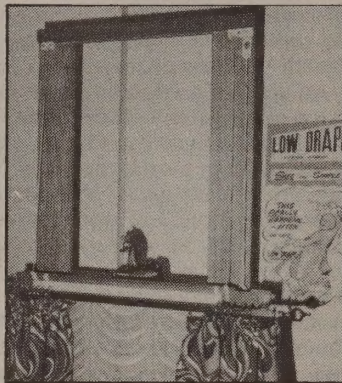
Among all the bathroom furniture and equipment Inva-Dex had an impressive range of showers, seats and shower units. The new **Squaredeck** free-standing corner fitting shower unit is similar to the **Ambideck** except the half-panels and doors are designed differently and it has a

higher curtain rail. The half-door enclosure allows assistance to be given to children or adults with more severe disabilities. The units have a flip-down seat and the shower trays have ramped access. The thermostatic controlled mixing valve and taps were very easy to use and had good sized levers as standard fittings. The shower units can be installed in any room and are suitable for everyone in the family. £875 each.

The **National Beauty Shower** also shown on the Inva-dex stand for the first time is in fact a family bidet and can be fitted to any standard lavatory. Very useful and takes up little space, but pricey at £500.

The new **Rifton bath chair** is press-button adjustable, comes in three sizes and fits easily into the bath. Four suction pads keep it steady and there are also straps for the waist and legs and head supports. The seat is made of a

durable nylon fabric that would drip dry easily. Easy to lift in and out leaving the bath free for others. Small, £161.70; large, £185.40 and adult, £206.90.



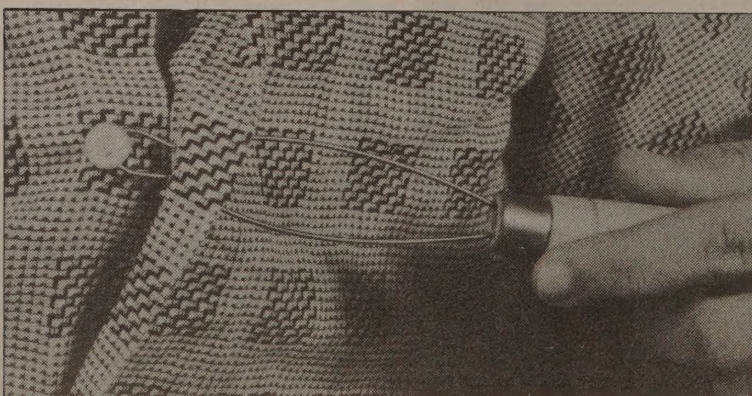
Low Drape curtain system.

Home helps

Simplicity itself is what I would go for in aids around the home and the **Low Drape** curtain hanging system is just that. It is for those of us who want to hang our own curtains or take them down for washing but cannot climb on to a step ladder or reach up to get them. Traditional rails, rods or wires are fastened to a moveable rail which is raised and lowered by a simple pulley. To fix in a permanent position the pulley cord is hooked to a small catch hidden behind the curtain. Low Drape can be fitted if you live in Scotland or obtained through mail order if you send the exact measurements of the window. Fitting is easy: 6 screws and a handy friend. £16.43 (4 ft width) to £21.83 (10 ft width) plus postage. Low Drape, 25 Colvilles Place, Kelvin Industrial Estate, East Kilbride, Scotland.

Homecraft has a wide range of small gadgets for use around the house. Everyone should have their **Button Hook**; it saves hours of frustration and embarrassment. You can button-up with one hand. £2.60.

Yale or **Mortice** keys are often too small for someone with cp like myself to hold and get into a lock. The **Key Turner** is a great help. Keys are fastened into a small, plastic handle which allows extra gripping and leverage. They can be folded into the handle for carrying about. £1.60 for 1 key, £1.96 for 2.



Communication

Possum was showing its new **Education Sub-Titling System** which operates in conjunction with the BBC Micro B computer and disc drive. It allows subtitles to be added to either a pre-recorded video tape or transmitted on live programmes and should help disabled people with a hearing impairment.

Button Hook (left) from Homecraft Supplies Ltd, 27 Trinity Road, London SW17.



Sue rides the new Poweride from Batricar Ltd, Griffin Mill, Thrupp, Stroud, Glos, tel: (0543) 882243.

Mobility

The **Booster TC** (Town and Country) is a new powerful electric scooter which is ideal for shopping or going to work. With its chunky tyres and powerful 2-wheel drive it can go up and down kerbs, over rough ground, and on snow. It has a swivel seat for easy transfer and is very comfortable. I found the small key to start it was a bit awkward, but the switch for selecting forward or reverse was easy to work. The operating lever can be right- or left-handed. Pulling it towards you makes the scooter move; releasing it acts as a gradual brake. The battery has a range of 25 miles; a battery warning light is attached to the handlebars.

I found the bike slightly awkward to begin with, but soon got used to controlling the operating lever while steering.

The **Booster** can be dismantled without tools for transportation but it would need a strong helper to lift it into the car. At £999 for the basic model it is expensive, but it would appeal to all ages, has low running costs, needs no road licence, insurance or road tax and goes on pavements.

Booster have also introduced a new power-assisted 3-speed **Trike** for those who want to propel themselves but need a bit of help. £499.

Another 3-wheeled scooter I found very easy to manoeuvre was the **Batricar Poweride**. It has rear-wheel drive and can climb 4½ in kerbs and 1 in 4 hills. I found the tiller control difficult to regulate speed: it tended to go from very slow to fast quite quickly; but this can be regulated to suit individual requirements. It has a 24 volt battery pack, electric braking and parking brake. The hinged armrests and rotating seat make it easy to get on or off. The **Poweride** has wire shopping baskets and support frame and other optional extras. £1,294 for the basic model.

For children who could not ride a bicycle, **Tri-Aid** made a version of the BMX bicycle. Now a smaller one, called the **Terrier**, should be helpful for children aged 3-7. £85.

Joncare is marketing the **Flexistand Major** which not only adjusts to different size people (from 7-year-olds to 6 ft 2 in, 18 stone adults) but allows them the normal swaying movements of standing instead of keeping them rigid. It is light and portable and much less clumsy and obtrusive than other designs I have seen. A person standing on the base can be moved at the press of a pedal which activates the castors. Various attachments available. £120-£539.



Booster TC (centre and left), **3-speed Trike** (right) from **Booster Electric Vehicles**, Bridge Works, Woodhead Rd, Honley, Huddersfield.

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As a member of a small team, you will report to an Improvement Grant Officer and your duties will involve processing applications for Home Improvement Grants, the majority of which will be adaptations for registered disabled people. Practical experience in surveying, estimating and building methods are necessary, and knowledge of the relevant Housing Act legislation will be an advantage.

As the duties of this post involve a close liaison with disabled people, applications from registered disabled persons with the relevant experience will be particularly welcome.

The ability to communicate with the general public, other Council Departments and professional bodies is essential.

Closing date 16th May, 1986 Ref. 609/IGA

Further particulars may be obtained from Peter Robertson, Principal Improvement Grant Officer, telephone 01-446 8511, Ext. 4591.

For full-time posts we offer – canteen facilities, a minimum of 20 days basic annual leave and additional leave at most Bank holidays. Assistance with housing, 100% of removal expenses and interest-free loans for annual season tickets may be available in approved cases.

Application forms and job profiles can be obtained from Geoff Fish, Chief Environmental Health Officer, Grove Lodge, 287 Regents Park Road, Finchley N3 3JY. Telephone 01-349 9121, Ext. 283/284.

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OUTLOOK

Motoring

Bekker hand control: simple, cheap, effective

I recently stayed at Langtoft in North Humberside to see for myself Alfred Bekker's hand control centre.

The fact that government departments and other agencies fail to provide adequate facilities and funding to help disabled drivers, and may address their needs in inappropriate ways, need not deter independent direct action to solve problems in a realistic way. Bekker Controls operates on this principle. Hand controls are manufactured at Langtoft to fit any make of car and are supplied in kit form.

The Langtoft Centre, in the Wolds of Yorkshire, also offers excellent overnight accom-

modation at modest charges (£12.50 + VAT for evening meal, bed and breakfast) so that potential customers can spend time discussing their needs and problems.

Alfred Bekker, who now has considerable practical experience of most kinds of disability, will advise on possible solutions free of charge.

He looks for the abilities of disabled people and how, if at all possible, their functional powers can be matched to mechanical controls so that they can drive safely. Assessment, he believes, should be a positive, common-sense process. If it concentrates at inordinate length, and in a clinical way, on negative aspects — on the potential for malfunction — it will simply demoralise the individual and in the end produce results which may be wildly impractical.

His hand controls are designed simply, but there is no sacrifice of quality in materials or workmanship. The price is kept low but sufficient to sustain the business. For example, a brake and accelerator for any model of

car costs £85; a right-hand clutch £75; a full conversion £185.

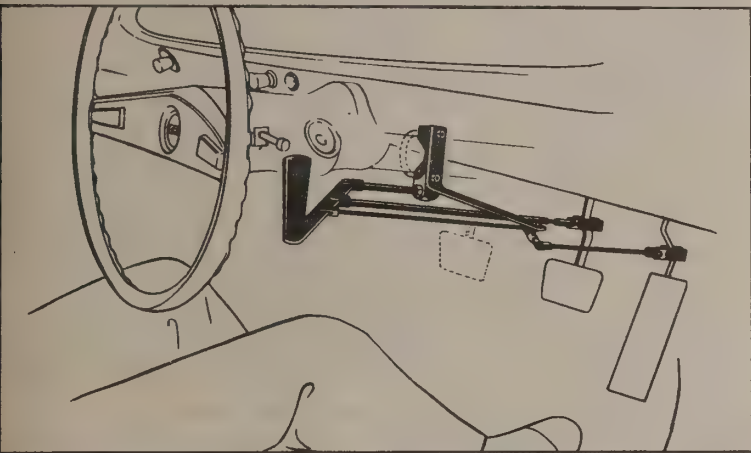
Around the country there are 65 mechanics who will, for a modest charge, fit the controls to your vehicle. Most of them are disabled, a fact which not only inspires their work but means that they can usually offer practical guidance to their customers. If the disability is outside their own experience, they can usually link you to someone else who has the relevant knowledge. So there is a network of down-to-earth assistance which is commercially self-supporting and does not rely on external funding. It is inexpensive both to administer and to the disabled customer.

The Bekkers, Enid and Alfred, though able-bodied themselves, are both committed to helping disabled people to lead a fuller life. Enid is involved with the British Paraplegic Association, helping to organise winter sports for people with spinal injury, an undertaking to which she brings an infectious enthusiasm.

The hand controls centre is similarly inspired. It began when Alf made a one-off set of controls for a paraplegic friend and has grown into an enterprise which now supplies up to 150 kits a week, not only in the United Kingdom but in various overseas countries. Yet it is still small enough to be responsive to individual needs and personally controlled. Impressively organised, but with heart, it is a business which succeeds.

Derek Kinrade

Alfred Bekker, "The Green", Langtoft, Driffield, North Humberside YO25 0TF, tel: (0377) 87276.



Brake and accelerator hand-control from Alfred Bekker.

Books

Cookery for Handicapped People

by James Hargreaves (Souvenir Press, Human Horizons Series, £8.95)

I thought this book was written with a good deal of common sense; its simple recipes and diagrams make preparing a meal easier.

I agree with James Hargreaves that it is important for mentally handicapped people to be independent and to gain confidence by actually doing things for themselves. To know that they can cook a meal is most rewarding and builds up their confidence to use the skill.

Of course, one must make sure that they understand the dangers in the kitchen, timing, and the words and the pictures in the recipes before leaving them alone.

Disabled people enjoy cooking, and with this book they should be able to achieve a good standard. It would be a great advantage to them if everyone concerned with teaching or caring could follow the ideas through, since the more disabled people practise, the more competent they become.

Jill Bailey
Housecraft teacher

As the parent of a keen but severely mentally handicapped "cook", I find the pictures and simplified recipes easy to adapt to my son's level of ability; I wanted to colour in the pictures myself!

The equipment in the pictures is found in most people's homes and is recognised by disabled people who are at that level of competence.

The high safety standards set

in the book should ensure that as teachers within the home, parents themselves observe the same rules when cooking and so provide a good model.

The number of recipes and methods of working mean the book will be useful for a long time. It would make an ideal present for a class, an individual, or a family where both handicapped and able-bodied children could enjoy cooking together.

My only complaint is that many of the diagrams are labelled with capital letters, whereas ingredients are more often labelled in small letters. This could be confusing.

Celia Laundon

Directory of Aids for Disabled and Elderly People

Compiled by Ann Darnbrough and Derek Kinrade (Woodhead-Faulkner Ltd, Fitzwilliam House, 32 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QY, £16.55 inclusive or £14.95 from booksellers)

In the field of reference books about disability, these authors have a track record second to none.

There is certainly a need for a source book on aids and in spite of the authors' claim that the book is not comprehensive, in the areas they have chosen the coverage is excellent.

However, reference books have to be practical, and I have doubts about this one. Despite the introductory chapter telling readers how to use the book, this will not be enough to avoid frustration, and those who dip into the book may miss the introduction.

An example. Suppose one is looking for a wheelchair by Everest & Jennings. The chapter

on wheelchairs begins on page 51. In common with other chapters, this page lists the contents of the chapter. However, it only lists topics, not page numbers. If one wants an Everest & Jennings transit chair, one has to turn the pages until the entry is spotted in its alphabetical listing.

On page 53 it begins: "Everest & Jennings (10): produces a number of Transit wheelchairs," and goes on to list some specifications in the range. The number next to the manufacturer's name is not a page number, but the number to be remembered when searching for the price of the wheelchair at the back of the chapter, on page 59.

The address and telephone number of the manufacturer of any wheelchair are not in this chapter either; they are in an appendix beginning on page 149. Moreover, the appendix is not divided under headings like the preceding chapters but simply lists alphabetically the manufacturers of all the aids in the book.

Separated information like this makes reference books unnecessarily complicated. The book is also laid out with narrow margins and, being a paperback, the pages are difficult to turn even for able-bodied hands (or, at least, my helper found it so).

9/10 for concept. Shame about the layout!

Chris Davies

Someone to Care For

by Alan Hendry (Alan Hendry, Miltara, Woodrow Lane, Aslacton, Norwich, Norfolk NR15 2JE, £2.50 inc. postage)

The story of a young girl's determination in overcoming her handicaps and going on to win The Spastics Society's Achievement Award.



Arif Hussein in *Half My Father's Age*, "... his hands were tied and rendered as impotent as his character's legs ..."

Theatre

Half my father's age

A man returns to the farm of his childhood to attend his father's funeral — a father he feels has betrayed him and his heritage by selling off half the farm for a motorway development. During the previous 3 years the man has lived apart from his wife and family and has become paraplegic. His name is Wight, which is the Anglo-Saxon word for man.

John Wood's play, *Half my Father's Age*, performed at The Taurus Theatre in North London last month, suffers from too much thematic shorthand and too little genuine characterisation. Although Arif Hussein did his best to bring life and conviction to the part of Wight, his hands were tied and rendered as impotent as his character's legs by Wood's intrusive imagery of

motorways, fallen trees, internal and external divisions and, of course, disability.

Wight's paraplegia never really seems more than a device for underlining the playwright's theme of alienation — made clear by lines such as "they ran a motorway across me too, but forgot to put in the bridge." Though some ironic and bitter humour is achieved through Wight's references to his legs as Bill and Gladys, his "dialogue" with them seems contrived — again because the intention of the author is too evident: he constantly stresses the connection between physical and emotional paralysis, but never explores it in any depth.

The performance and direction (by Belinda Shaw) of what was essentially a one-man show were sensitive and resourceful. The imposing motorway backdrop was gloomily effective. But ultimately this wasn't enough to rescue a rather dreary evening.

Alan Durant

Art and drama workshop exhibition

An exhibition of the work produced at The Spastics Society's Art and Drama Workshop at the Grangewood Centre in Essex, will be held at Colchester Library, Lion Walk Precinct, Colchester, on 30 May–18 June.

It will include all the visual work produced during the week, such as silk screen printing, and photographs of the dance, drama and music workshops.

The building is fully accessible.

The picture below shows the dance workshop, tutored by Maggie Landells.



There's no such thing as a free lunch — and *Disability Now* is no exception.

The newspaper costs The Spastics Society 40p a copy or £4.80 for a year's supply. At the moment it comes to you free.

If you enjoy reading *Disability Now* and would like to see it continue, please send us a donation. £1 or £1,000, everything is welcome!

Please make out cheques and postal orders to The Spastics Society, and send them to

Gayle Mooney
Room 2B
Disability Now
12 Park Crescent
London W1N 4EQ.

Spring is here! So how does *your* garden grow?



Two visitors to the Battersea Demonstration Garden put together an arrangement of plants for a hanging basket.

Kathy Johnson

Spring has sprung and things get moving out in the garden. Well, they certainly were at the Battersea Demonstration Garden in the centre of London's Battersea Park on the open day in March.

The garden is one of two which the charity Horticultural Therapy operate—the other is at Syon Park in Brentford. There is also a demonstration garden for disabled people at Wisley, the Royal Horticultural Society's gardens.

Horticultural Therapy (HT) is an organisation which encourages and promotes gardening, horticulture and agriculture among people with disabilities and special needs. One of its aims is to establish demonstration gardens so that people who have never tried gardening or have physical disability can find out for themselves the pleasures and benefits of gardening.

The Battersea garden is the first of HT's demonstration gardens to have a full-time demonstrator. Ruth Tessler is a horticulturalist and since she started in January 1985 over 1200 adults and children have visited the garden.

There is a demonstration room where people can learn about gardening techniques and have a go themselves. Outside, there are lawns and raised flower beds for more "accessible" gardening. Some of them are quite ingenious, made from old car tyres, laid in tiers and painted.

Kathy Johnson visits a Horticultural Therapy open day

The open day was busy and volunteers were helping Ruth with the groups and individuals who had come from in and around London.

Six people from the Extended Education Centre at Manor Hospital in Epsom were learning how to create a bottle garden. (If you use charcoal in the base it absorbs the moisture in this mini greenhouse.) Others were making hanging baskets.

Alison Ryan, Director of Horticultural Therapy, wants to have 6 more demonstration gardens within the next 3 years, possibly at Liverpool, Dulwich, Glasgow, Belfast and York.

"We have no problem in finding people willing to offer us land," she says. "The problem comes in the funding. It costs about £20,000 per year to run a garden and employ a full-time demonstrator".

She hopes to get the money from local authorities.

Funding for the Battersea demonstration garden came from the Greater London Council, now abolished. Luckily the London Borough of Wandsworth (in which the park lies) agreed to take over the funding. HT is also hoping for help from the London Borough's Association. In this way people from all over London

can continue to visit and take part in the garden's activities.

The proposed garden in Dulwich Park is being designed and largely built by disabled students from South London College, who are also raising money for the project. HT is negotiating with Southwark Council to secure regular funding for the garden and a demonstrator.

HT was pleased at the turn-out for the open day. "The more people who visit me the merrier," said Ruth Tessler. "Just make an appointment first!"

Ruth Tessler, Battersea Demonstration Garden, c/o Manager's Office, Battersea Park, Albert Bridge Road, London SW11. Tel: 01-720 2212.

Donald Mitchell, Horticultural Therapy Demonstration Garden, Syon Park, Brentford, Middx. Tel: 01-560 0882.

Demonstration garden for disabled people, Wisley Gardens, The Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley, Nr Ripley, Surrey. Tel: (0483) 224234.

Membership of Horticultural Therapy costs £10 a year for able-bodied people and £7.50 for disabled people. Members receive Growth Point, HT's quarterly magazine. Write to Horticultural Therapy, Goulds Ground, Vallis Way, Frome, Somerset BA11 3DW. Tel: (0373) 64782.

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Malcolm Weare (left) of Horticultural Therapy with a group from the Extended Education Centre, Manor Hospital, Surrey learning how to make a bottle garden.

And now, for readers in black and white The Spastics Society's new red T-shirt.



Put some more colour into your life and order one today! Perfect for fund raising or just having fun—and only £2.99 (including postage and packing). Available from: Edel Musselle, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

The chance of a break for Bolton families

Bolton and District Spastics Society's respite care centre can accommodate nearly twice as many people as before, now its £81,000 extension is complete.

It was opened on 11 April by the Duke of Westminster, president of The Spastics Society, who described it as a "great tribute" to charity workers and the people of Bolton.

New Hyde Lea will now have room for 13 visitors at a time, and for the first time will be able to offer single room accommodation. The extension also allows extra space for kitchen and dining areas.

The centre, based in a Victorian House at Astley Bridge, is a unique facility in the Bolton area, giving parents of handi-

capped children the chance to have a break. Whilst staying at New Hyde Lea, their children are encouraged to develop independence skills. Competition for places has, up till now, been keen.

"We are delighted with the extension, which is so urgently needed because in the past we have had to turn people away," says Barbara Ashman, chairman of the Bolton and District Spastics Society. The opening, she said, was the climax to 3 years' hard work by all concerned.

£20,000 was donated to the appeal by The Spastics Society, and £45,000 has been raised from the people of Bolton and its surroundings. £9,000 has still to be found.

Bolton Evening News



Mrs Thatcher meets Wayne Arness from the White Lodge Centre. He's being helped in his exercises by Geneen Bray.

The day the Iron Lady got bossed around

The week President Reagan bombed Tripoli, the Prime Minister found time to take a break from diplomacy and meet the disabled children from the White Lodge Centre.

Her spur of the moment visit came, the Prime Minister confided to White Lodge principal

Carol Myer, at the end of a particularly stressful and trying week. But her scheduled 50 minute visit turned into one hour and twenty minutes, and ended in a hug and a kiss for Carol Myer.

"She'd been very well-briefed," says Carol Myer. "We wanted her to visit because we're a prime example of a voluntary organisation working very closely with a local authority. But there are still areas where we need help."

"We're very worried, for example, about the tapering of joint funding. The Prime Minister ought to know what the local authority is and isn't doing for a centre of excellence."

Mrs Thatcher toured the whole site, accompanied by Carol Myer and David Hendon of the North Hants and West Surrey Spastics Society and chairman of the White Lodge management committee.

She listened to criticisms from adults and aprents about provision, and absorbed what was said rather than brushing it off, says

Carol Myer.

"She was astounding in her ability to talk with, and not at, the young p-people attending the centre," she says. "At one stage she was on her knees on a physio mat holding a child. I told her off for helping the child too much. She told me off for being too bossy."

Security for the visit was tight - sniffer dogs searched the centre beforehand and police scattered in the woods surrounding the centre. Such was the short-notice of the visit that some of the White Lodge staff had no idea Mrs Thatcher was coming.

The contact is bound to have lasting benefits, believes Carol Myer.

"Now we've made a relationship and she's seen what we do, I know that when we write a letter it won't just be torn up and put in the bin."

"As a Prime Minister she was interested in what we were doing at White Lodge," she says. "But as a mother she was interested in the children."

LOCAL GROUP NEWS

Edited by Simon Crompton



The Duke of Westminster unveils a commemorative plaque accompanied by the Mayor of Bolton (left) and Barbara Ashman, chairman of the Bolton group.

Thamesdown gives £10,000 to local causes

Swindon Evening Advertiser

19-year-old Robert Maltby can go out on his own for the first time in his life thanks to the Thamesdown Spastics Association.

His new, blue Batricar, worth £2,000, was part of a £10,000 hand-out to deserving individuals and organisations in March.

Robert is enjoying his newfound freedom already, and hopes when he's fully mastered the controls he'll be going down to the shops on his own.

"Before, my mum pushed me round in a wheelchair," he says. "But she has asthma, so she was huffing and puffing. I'm also getting much heavier - so mum tells me."

Robert and his mother, Jeanette, had to move out of their

council house of 25 years, just so that they would have somewhere to store the buggy. Jeanette is not happy with her new home - it's cold and damp - but says it's better for Robert.

The Batricar was presented by Thamesdown and District Spastics Association's president Ann Phillips (mother of Captain Mark Phillips) at the Uplands School, Penhill.

She also presented a cheque for £2,000 to Brimble Hill School, which has a large percentage of children with cerebral palsy.

£2,000 also went towards a £100,000 field studies centre.

The Thamesdown group raised the money through their annual sponsored walk, and through doorknocks.



Robert Maltby tries out his new buggy for the first time. The Association's chairman, Tony Long is on the right, Ann Phillips on the left.

Are you proud of your yearbook?

If you think all the effort you put into your yearbook makes it worthy of recognition, why not enter The Spastics Society's Local Group Yearbook Competition?

Time is running out though - the closing date for entries is 14 July.

You could win an electric typewriter, a holiday for a disabled person at Churchtown Farm in Cornwall or goods worth £100 from The Spastics Society's Christmas catalogue.

The entry form includes useful tips on production.

For forms, contact Edel Muselle, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 5020.



Spinners money-spinner. Councillor Mrs J Ainscough, Mayor of Preston and President of the Preston and District Spastics Group, accepted a cheque for £1,700 in March from the Spinners' Ball Committee. The Mayor and Mr Ainscough were at the Preston group's annual charity fair at Preston Guild Hall, which raised £3,000 to renovate the group's holiday bungalow in Morecambe. In front of the Mayor in the picture is Robert, son of Bobby Cartwright, Chairman of the Preston group.

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Simon Crompton

Share Your Problems

With Margaret Morgan

How can my "shopping girl" become a housemother?

"Can you please send me some advice for my 'shopping girl'? She comes once a week to do my shopping for me, as I am totally disabled. She leaves school this summer and she is 16 years of age. She wants to be a housemother. I have told her it is not so easy and that she will have to work up from the bottom. I know all about centres for spastic people, having spent most of my life in them, but I can't answer her questions. So will you please explain to me how she can start training and send some details for me to pass on to her."

I myself have met you a few times over the years, but you have been through so many case histories you won't remember me, or do you?

Hope to hear from you soon and thanks for all your help in the past."

Yes, I do remember you and I am very pleased to hear from you after all these years.

I am sending you some leaflets to pass on to the school-girl who does your shopping. It is very encouraging to know that she wants to work with people with disabilities when she leaves school.

Members of staff who were formerly known as "housemothers" and "housefathers" are now called residential social workers and applicants for these posts usually have to be over 18 years old. If they have no previous experience or qualifications they would join as assistant residential social workers and would be eligible for in-service training and promotion later on.

There are, however, a number of training courses for young people of 16+ and I strongly recommend that your "shopping girl" should discuss the possibilities for training in the care field with her local careers officer, as it may well be possible for this to be arranged through the Youth Training Scheme.

The Spastics Society's Castle

Priory College offers a course leading to a Certificate in Residential Care of the Handicapped. The minimum age for entry is 18 and one year's residential or similar experience is required. Details of training courses and information about vacancies can be obtained from the Personnel Department, Social Services Division, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ. Tel: 01-387 9571.

A pressing need for accommodation for disabled people under 60 - what can you do?

"I am writing to enquire if you know of any accommodation for the age range 35-60. By accommodation I mean warden-controlled flats or bungalows for disabled people. There is plenty of warden-controlled accommodation for the over 60 age group, but virtually nothing at all for the 35-60s. I have discovered that there is a pressing need for such accommodation and I am wondering what The Spastics Society is doing about it."

My mother died in this hotel for the elderly in 1981 and since then I have been living here. I have tried to obtain warden-controlled accommodation, which I need, but it is impossible if you are under 60. I shall be 55 this year and I suffer from spastic paralysis in my legs. I find walking difficult, but I have a Zimmer walking frame and a wheelchair, which I would need to use in a flat or bungalow.

I hope you may be able to help me with this problem."

I am glad that you have written to me and I have made enquiries about various housing schemes for people with disabilities who are under the age of 60. I understand that in some areas warden-controlled accommodation can be made available to people who are under retirement age and who have special needs, so I



should certainly talk over the possibilities with your local social services department.

There are also a number of Housing Associations catering for disabled people where a community assistant or warden is employed to provide emergency and other services. Mrs Diana Twitchin at the King's Fund Centre maintains a register of housing/care schemes for physically handicapped people and if you write to her with details about yourself and the areas in which you would like to live, she will send you information about schemes which might be appropriate for you.

I suggest that you also write directly to Habinteg Housing Association Ltd asking them for details of their developments and likely vacancies.

As far as The Spastics Society is concerned, I know that a great deal is currently taking place in the residential field. The needs for more independent living schemes and for accommodation for the over 50s have been fully recognised and many new plans are in the pipe-line. Either Mr Fred Osman, the residential placements manager, or your regional social worker will be glad to let you know about current and future openings that might be suitable for you, so do get in touch with them.

I do hope that you will soon find a suitable home for yourself, with the personal help that you need.

Mrs Diana Twitchin, Project Assistant, King's Fund Centre, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF. Tel: 01-267 6111.

Habinteg Housing Association Ltd., 10 Nottingham Place, London W1M 3FL. Tel: 01-935 6931. Mr Fred Osman, Placements Manager, The Spastics Society, Pembroke House, Victoria Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington WA4 2AL. Tel: (0925) 602 986.

What's On

Courses at Castle Priory

ASA Preliminary Award Course for Teachers of Swimming for the Disabled - a basic introductory course for those wishing to work with people with disabilities. Led by Paul Barber, national development officer for Swimming for the Disabled Amateur Swimming Association. 22-24 June. Tuition £29, residence £40.

Leisure, Recreation and Sports in Day and Residential Services - a practical and theoretical course for organisers and leaders of activities, recreation officers and administrators. Sessions will make people aware of the many pursuits available, how to adapt to different settings and disabilities, how to organise and available resources. 24-27 June. Tuition £55, residence £60.

The Special Needs of Children and Adolescents with Physical and Communication Disorders - primarily for educational and clinical psychologists. 2-4 July. Tuition £50, residence £40.

Blissymbolics Communication System - an introductory course on communication for children or adults with severe communication disorders. 18-22 July. Tuition £116, residence £80.

Care and Early Education of Young Children with Very Severe Learning Problems - a course for pre-school counsellors, teachers of nursery and infant-age children and health visitors, but other disciplines welcome. 28-31 July. Tuition £55, residence £60.

For more information about any of these courses, write to Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0HE. Tel: (0491) 37551.

Conferences and Leisure

Prevention of Mental Handicap: A World View is a 2-day seminar for professionals on 28-29 May about the worldwide prevention of mental handicap. It will cover genetics, screening, infection and immunisation, birth problems, environmental and social factors, and health economics. £35 (members of the Forum on Mental Retardation), £55 (non members). Registration forms from Dr Gwilym Hosking, The Ryegate Centre, Children's Hospital, Sheffield S10 5DD. Tel: (0742) 666201, ext 28.

A New Approach to Vocational Rehabilitation is a 2-day course on 12-13 June (and repeated 6-7 October) at the Kings Fund Centre in London, organised by the Rehabilitation Resource Centre of City University. It provides an overview of the approach being developed by the Vocational Rehabilitation Department at Queens Park Hospital in Blackburn. This emphasises the importance of careful planning of rehabilitation programmes. The course costs £124. Further details from the Rehabilitation Resource Centre, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB. Tel: 01-253 4399, ext 4610.

Transition to Higher Education Course for Handicapped Students is a residential course being held at Edinburgh University on 23-25 June for anyone with a disability considering going to university in 1986 or 1987. For details contact Mrs Irene MacKenzie, Administrative Assistant, National Bureau for Handicapped Students, University of Edinburgh, Old College, South Bridge, Edinburgh. Tel: 031-667 1011 ext 4298.

Day Centres to Resource Centres: A New Way Forward is a conference being held by the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation on 24 June at the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Weston-super-Mare. It will discuss existing day centre provision and ways in which resource centres could develop from the present centres to offer an improved service. The fee is £14.50 (including lunch). Further details from the Conference Officer, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB. Tel: 01-637 5400, ext 213.

Down's Syndrome is a day conference on 12 July at Friends House in London for parents and professionals concerned with Down's babies and children. Organised by the Down's Children's Association, it includes talks on the heart, parents' experiences of children of different abilities, and speech and hearing. Cost is £7.50 (lunch included). Contact Mrs Caro, 17 St Augustine's House, Bloomburg Street, London SW1V 2RG. Tel: 01-834 9692.

The Education of Children with Multiple Handicaps. This is a 4-week course for teachers on 7 July-1 August organised by Sense (The National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association) and Galaudet College in Washington DC. Areas covered are Behavioural and Educational Management and Development of Language and Cognition. Tuition costs £260, residential fees are £240. Further information from Marion Tobin, Education Officer, Sense-in-the-Midlands, 4 Church Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3TD. Tel: 021-454 2405.

Stars Garden Party. Come and meet Leslie Crowther and other stars on Sunday 29 June at Colwall Court, Pages Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex. Lots of stalls and things to do. The event begins at 2pm. For further details, tel: (0424) 211491.

RESPO '86 is an international congress on sports and leisure for people with disabilities taking place on 13-17 September in Arnhem, The Netherlands. The programme includes technical workshops for those involved in sports training, seminars on setting up sports organisations, and medical symposia. Entry fee \$100. Further details from Bureau International Coordinating Committee, Heyenoordseweg 5, 6813 GG Arnhem, The Netherlands.

Adapted Physical Activity for Disabled Persons is a conference in Brussels on 24-27 November organised by the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity. Topics include sport for physically disabled people and adapted physical activities for people with epilepsy, cystic fibrosis and asthma. Contact Mrs M Plasch, Universite Libre de Bruxelles, ISEPK (CP168), Avenue Paul Heger 28, B-1050, Bruxelles.

CLASSIFIED

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REC ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR with battery charger and instruction book. £350 ono. Contact Mr Spearpoint, Swindon (0793) 727851.

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SPEEDWELL ELECTRIC GO-KART. Suit child 7-13 years. Good condition, with extras. Needs new battery. £250 ono. Tel: (0453) 824374.

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porth 3). Finished/equipped to purchasers requirements. Price £38,000. Mobility Housing. Tel: (0239) 810593.

Services

HANDICAPPED CHILD? NEED A NANNY? I did - so I formed Special Care Agency to help other families like ours. If you do - ring (0491) 671842.

Find-a-Friend

MAN 44 YEARS, with cp, living in the South, would like a female penfriend with view to meeting who does not like pubs and restaurants. Please write to Box No 125, *Disability Now*, address on page 16.

LADY, with cp and some hearing loss, would like to correspond with male penfriends 30-37 years with similar disabilities, living in reasonable distance of Barnet, Potters Bar, Enfield area. I enjoy swimming, dining out, the cinema, like dogs and am fun to be with. Please write

to Box No 126, *Disability Now*, address on page 16.

MAN would like to correspond with any young disabled person with the hope of giving them an uplift in encouraging them to fulfil a happy life. I too am disabled but try to keep cheerful. Please write to Box No 127, *Disability Now*, address on page 16.

PENFRIENDS WANTED by young lady, 26, living in a Hampshire village. I'm interested in collecting, television, books, crafts and heritage - and writing and receiving letters! Please write to Box No 128, *Disability Now*, address on page 16.

SINCERE AND UNDERSTANDING man of 58, who is partly disabled, would like to meet a disabled lady for friendship and companionship, preferably living in East Anglia or the South East. I am a non-smoker and able to drive. Please write to Box No 129, *Disability Now*, address on page 16.

GERMAN EXCHANGE. German student, 20, male, studying at University of Regensburg, would like to exchange with an English person during July or August for 2-4 weeks. The English person would go to Germany. Dates to be arranged. Please contact Anita Loring, ICPS, 5 Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5RN. Tel: 01-794 9761.

MAN, 30, with cp wishes to meet young lady 20-30. I enjoy life, drive a Metro, like cinema, concerts and going out. Am prepared to travel. Please write to Nigel Skinner, 89 Glencroft Road, Yardley, Birmingham B26 2HT.

Inner London Education Authority

LAMBETH YOUTH INTEGRATION PROJECT

Requires a **Part-time youth worker** (16 hours per week) who has the ability and the enthusiasm to facilitate interaction between the community and young people with disabilities.

Applicants should preferably be experienced but someone with commitment and initiative would have an advantage.

Rates of pay: A) £5.66 B) £5.19 C) £4.34 per hour.

For further information please contact the Deputy Senior Youth Officer, Lambeth Youth Office, 1/3 Brixton Road, SW9 6DE. Tel: 01-582 5656. Closing date: 16 May 1986.

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PEOPLE

Shops' success story: the man who made a million

In 16 years, John Tough and his team of staff and volunteers have built the Shops Department from nothing to a million-making inch-pin of The Spastics Society.

Figures released last month indicate that the year's profits broke the £1 million barrier for the first time. And if John Tough's 5-year plan is accepted, this profit targets for 1990-91 will be £2.5 million.

"Obviously I'm delighted with last year's figures," he says, "and £1 million is very good in itself - but we do need much more."

To celebrate the shops' success story, each Society shop is holding a "Thanks a million!" party at 11am on 24 May.

"It's our way of saying thank you to all our customers and volunteers," says John Tough, who came to The Spastics Society in 1970 from Marks & Spencer, where he was a department manager.

Last year's profit was an increase of 68 per cent on the



John Tough

previous year. The escalating profits, says John Tough, can be put down to a highly motivated and increasingly well-trained staff who communicate well on all levels. They have also been helped by the economic climate, the "anything goes" attitude to fashion and low inflation.



High fidelity. John Rigby, warden of The Spastics Society's Roman Lodge centre in Basingstoke for 14 years, retired last month. He is pictured above (bottom left) with staff, residents and friends and their leaving gift of a stereo system. Mr Rigby's wife, Elma, retired from Roman Lodge just a few weeks before.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The National Garden Festival is open from now until 26 October at Etruria Hall in Stoke-on-Trent. There are good facilities for people with disabilities including ramps and handrails where there are steps, disabled toilet facilities and disabled car parking close to the main entrance. Disabled people can travel along 3 trails in the buggies provided. There is a demonstration garden for disabled gardeners and a scented garden for visitors with a visual handicap. Open every day from 10am until dusk. National Garden Festival, Etruria Hall, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1BQ. Tel: (0782) 289788.

Independent living information. The telephone number of the Hampshire Centre for Independent Living is Petersfield (0730) 68208, not as printed in March's DN. The South Office of Greater London Centres for Independent Living (mentioned in the same article) is having to close due to lack of finance, and communications should be directed to Anne Rae, 12 Barrie Court, Lyonsdown Road, New Barnet, Herts EN5 1HZ. Tel: 01-41 0996.

Can I Help Your Sarah? is a new film produced by the John

Grooms Association for the Disabled, looking at the levels of independence severely disabled people can achieve. Available from the John Grooms Association, 10 Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LP. Tel: 01-802 7272.

The Centre for Policy on Ageing has moved to 25-31 Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 3QP. Tel: 01-253 1787. CPA's aims are to encourage better services for elderly people by promoting informed debate, formulating policies and encouraging the spread of good practice.

York City Art Gallery now has a staircase lift (with a folding seat and also a platform for a wheelchair) so people unable to use the stairs can reach the exhibition gallery on the first floor. There is an improved ramp at the entrance and toilets for disabled people on the ground floor. Further information from York City Art Gallery, Exhibition Square, York. Tel: (0904) 23839.

The Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability has moved to 8 Bedford Row, London WC1 4BA. Tel: 01-430 0558.

The Visiting Aids Centre of The Spastics Society will be at The Promenade, Llandudno, on

Marathon effort for The Spastics Society

Over £3,500 has been raised for The Spastics Society and its affiliated groups through the efforts of 12 runners taking part in the London Marathon on 26 April.

The fastest runner sponsored for The Spastics Society was Malcolm Pickup from Leeds whose 3 hours 35 minutes run is expected to bring in £1,500 in sponsorship for the Leeds and District Spastic's Industrial Work Centre.

"It was a tremendous event with a great atmosphere," Malcolm said. It was the first marathon he had run, although he has taken part in 3 half marathons - a mere 13 miles as opposed to the gruelling 26 miles, 385 yards of the London marathon.

"I wasn't too happy with my time, but I did pass fellow runners John Conteh and Jimmy Saville on the way."

Two runners raised £1000 for The Spastics Society's Inglefield Manor School. Diane Jenkins and Sheila Joy, who work at the school, completed the course in 4 hours 46 minutes and 4 hours 38 minutes respectively.

The £600 raised by Diane is to go into the Budapest Fund of the school's conductive education unit. The £400 Sheila raised will buy video equipment for the school.

They only took up running last May and, like Malcolm Pickup, this was their first marathon.

"It was absolutely incredible - a great experience," said Diane. "I was almost in tears at the finish, I was so happy to have completed the whole course."

She found the first 18 miles passed fairly smoothly, but after that it was sheer hard work and she became unaware of the others running with her and the crowds cheering them on. "I perked up in the last couple of miles, though," she said. "The finish was in reach!"

Other runners raising funds for The Spastics Society, included Jonathan Greenhalgh from the advertising agency DMB&B who produce the Society's advertising posters. He completed the course in 3 hours 57 minutes and expects to collect over £100 from DMB&B staff for The Spastics Society.



Sheila Joy (left) and Diane Jenkins from Inglefield Manor in the London Marathon raising £1,000.



The price is right! Sarah Warwick pours the bubbly to celebrate as her boss, Tom Wilmot, managing director of Harvard Securities, presents £10,137 to Leslie Crouther, a member of the Stars Organisation for Spastics. This is the third £10,000 cheque Harvard has presented to The Spastics Society under its Share Care scheme, where they donate £1 to the Society for every share transaction they complete with the general public.

Scottish work centre opens

A work centre for 160 disabled people has been opened in Glasgow. It is owned and run by the Scottish Council for Spastics which this year celebrates 40 years of helping people in Scotland.

The Scottish Spastics Work Centre is the third to be opened on the Hillington Industrial Estate; the previous two have been outgrown.

The new centre, funded from loans of over £350,000 from the Strathclyde Regional Council, has been converted from an engineering factory. It will provide mainly sub-contract work from local industries completed to professional standards.

Since there is 24,000 sq ft of floorspace, the centre can expand to employ up to 200 people. There are also plans to build an "aids for daily living" unit inside the factory.

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Clarke Triumphs!

Continued from page 1

Mr Kinnock called the Government's approach to the Clarke Bill "cheap and nasty". Mrs Thatcher defended her Government's record on disability compared with Labour's, citing increases in mobility allowance, increases in benefits for the long-term sick and disabled, extending entitlement to invalidity care allowance.

"If the Prime Minister cares as much as she says she cares," said Mr Kinnock, "surely supporting my hon Friend's Bill would be a very small addition to what she has already done."

A lobby of MPs on 9 April produced a huge turn-out of around 200 people - individuals and organisations from all over the country. Representatives from the BDA, MENCAP, MIND, BCODP and The Spastics Society were all there.

"I should like to thank all the voluntary bodies who took part in the campaign," said Tom Clarke. "The disability lobby is the best organised, the most articulate and the most influential of all those I've seen, and others in Parliament agree with me."

The Bill goes to the House of Lords on 14 May, where there is still the danger that it will be "talked out". But, as Tom Clarke says, "It would be a brave man who'd do that to a Bill with this popularity."



Three school-leavers from Broadstones who will be going to Tiptree, (from left) John Cartwright, Stuart Fyffe and Alex Farrell.

Pioneering scheme for disabled school-leavers

The Spastics Society will be setting a new standard of care in the community when it opens 4 bungalows in the village of Tiptree, Essex this summer. The bungalows will accommodate 14 school-leavers who are severely physically and mentally disabled.

"The Spastics Society is committed to enabling disabled people to live in ordinary homes, in ordinary streets in the community," says social services director, John Belcher. "Tiptree is not our first scheme, but it is the largest, and in this sense I think it is pioneering. I know of no other voluntary organisation which has placed so many people with this degree of disability in the community."

Eight of the teenagers will come from the Society's Broadstones Hostel in Birmingham where they have completed a year's course developing their living skills. The rest will be decided from among 70 applications from school-leavers inside and outside the Society who are hoping for a residential place this year.

"Apart from these 6 places and 12 at Broadstones for one year we have nothing to offer them except a place on the Society's waiting list," says John Belcher.

And the situation is getting worse as the number of school-leavers rises and more apply for places. "The figure of 70 will probably triple over the next 5 years", he says.

Those who are going to Broadstones seem pleased about it.

"It sounds marvellous" says Patricia Cartwright, mother of John aged 19. "I never thought John could cope on his own because he's so severely handicapped. But he had his own room at Broadstones, a place of his own,

and that's what he thinks about the bungalow. He'll be able to stay there always, and its near our home."

All the bungalows (two bought, two newly built) will conform to Government standards and guidelines for residential accommodation. Each person will have their own room and their own individual programme plan geared to their needs and wishes.

Tiptree was chosen for its proximity to London, Colchester and two Society residential centres, Drummonds and Grange-wood. It means there are opportunities for further education and many activities, plus support from experienced staff. With all three centres under one manager, resources such as transport can be shared.

Tiptree is seen as a model scheme, an attempt to replace the old caring ideal with one of enabling young disabled people to cope as far as possible on their own. "We are deliberately not over-providing", says Colin Hedley, the area social services manager. "We are putting in appropriate support so that their skills are not swamped. It's a question of keeping them on their toes, wanting to live as individuals. Life must not be so easy that it becomes meaningless."

The Tiptree scheme is costing The Spastics Society nearly £500,000 to set up and about £150,000 a year to run. So far the Stars Organisation for Spastics has raised £80,000 from a Dickie Henderson tribute concert and Harvard Securities have contributed another £30,000. The DHSS and local authorities have agreed to pay £17,000 a year for each place.

For 14 school-leavers the future looks bright.

Mentally handicapped people are not moving into the community

Although the population in mental handicap hospitals has dropped by about 20 per cent in the last ten years, this is mainly due to deaths among longstay residents rather than the success of government policies for community care.

In fact, only 13 mental handicap hospitals were approved for closure between 1979 and 1984 involving only 2 per cent of the total hospital population. Of these 500 people, most of them - 70 per cent - were transferred to other NHS hospitals. 17 per cent went into NHS hostels and community units, 5 per cent into local authority homes and hostels and a negligible number into accommodation provided by private and voluntary organisations.

These are the findings of a new report written by Alison Wertheimer, director of the Campaign for People with Mental Handicaps.

The report shows that some health authorities have made efforts to provide alternative accommodation consistent with good community care principles, others have not.

"Closures presently taking place are often doing no more than helping the health authority to rationalise its resources", says the report.

It recommends that the DHSS should spell out clearly what are the acceptable alternatives to hospitals; annual ministerial re-

views of regional plans should monitor what is being offered when a hospital or unit is to be closed; people with mental handicaps should only be transferred to another institution in an emergency; and no one should be discharged until an individual care plan has been drawn up by the relevant district health and local authorities and a plan of action agreed.

Hospital Closures in the Eighties is available from CMH Publications, 5 Kentings, Comberton, Cambs CB3 7DT for £2 inclusive.

Hephaistos School closes

The Hephaistos School, a special school near Reading, will close in July next year.

"The disappearance of Hephaistos will leave an important gap in the range and variety of educational provision available to physically handicapped youngsters," say the Parents and Friends Association.

A spokesman from Berkshire County Council said: "The school has had a wonderful reputation in the county, but in the last 10 years rolls have fallen so dramatically that it is no longer a going concern. The decision was taken very reluctantly by the council, with the children's best interests in mind."

ICA does discriminate

Continued from page 1

should gain from the court decision to make sure they claim now if they haven't already.

According to Tony Newton, the Minister for Social Security, if the Government loses its case and accepts the Court's ruling, it must find an extra £100 million a year to pay married women. The Government would not respond until the Court had given its judgement, he said in an interview on the BBC Today programme, but he admitted

discrimination.

"In a world where there was no other consideration one would want to remove the discrimination which clearly exists in relation to this particular benefit", he said.

Answering a point made by shadow social services secretary, Michael Meacher, Tony Newton said there was "no basis" for the allegation that the Government might withdraw ICA from married men rather than pay it to married women.

Disability Now

Published by The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 5020.

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Kingslea Press Ltd., Central Buildings, 24 Southwark Street, London SE1 1TY. Tel: 01-403 3115.

Typesetting by Foremost Typesetting Ltd., 56 Carter Lane, London EC4.

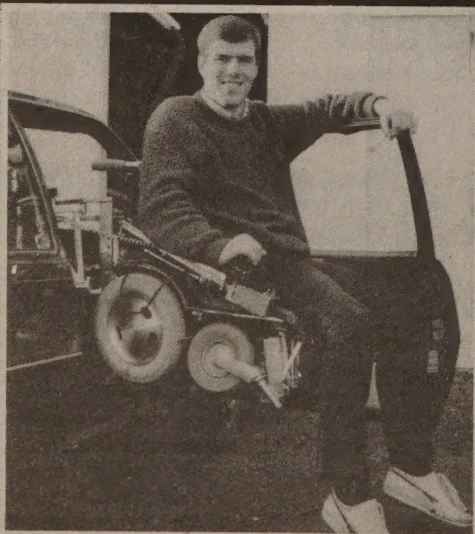
Printed by Senews, Hastings and 108 Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, London EC4. Tel: 01-583 3190.

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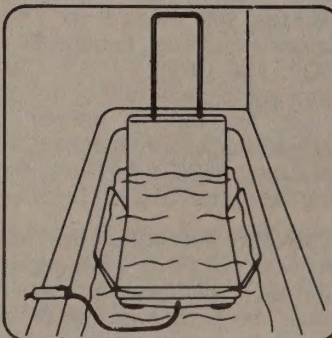
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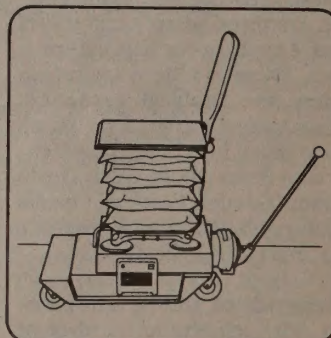
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